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*A Pilgrimage with a
Milliner's Needle*



Anna Walther



Gift of
Herbert Hoover, Esquire

**A PILGRIMAGE WITH
A MILLINER'S NEEDLE**



*THEY wrenched from my shaking
fingers my handbag and made
themselves at home with its contents.*

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A PILGRIMAGE WITH A MILLINER'S NEEDLE

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• *Chlorophyll a* (Chl a) is the primary photosynthetic pigment in all photosynthetic organisms. It is a green pigment that absorbs light energy in the blue and red regions of the visible spectrum. Chl a is found in the thylakoid membranes of chloroplasts in plants and algae, and in the plasma membrane of cyanobacteria.

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*They wrenched from my shaking
lapses my handbag and made
themselves at home with its contents.*

A PILGRIMAGE WITH A MILLINER'S NEEDLE

BY
ANNA WALTHER

WITH AN APPRECIATION BY
RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

*"I cannot rest from travel: I will drink
Life to the lees! all times I have enjoyed
Greatly, have suffered greatly, both with those
That loved me and alone; on shore and when
Thro' scudding drifts the rainy Hyades
Vest the dim seas."*

TENNYSON



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TO

MRS. K. . . .

**WHOSE LOVING COUNSEL HAS BEEN
MY GUIDING INSPIRATION**

Anna Walther:

“Beautiful is the earth,
Splendid the sky,
Wonderful the pilgrimage of the soul”—

So run lines of an old ballad of her own ballad-making and fairy-tale-telling people, on which Miss Walther's "Odyssey" may well be regarded as an honorable and suggestive commentary. For here, indeed, is a "pilgrimage of the soul"—a soul of fine temper and magnetic courage, a fairy-tale from the land of fairy-tales, first dreamed and then lived by the teller. Once more Miss Walther proves what practical things dreams are, if only they chance to be dreamed by the right people. Once, while still a child, she had a curious dream of the night, which served to emphasize and give shape to her dreams of the day, and was to prove of prophetic force in the molding of her whole career. Certainly it was a quaint and pretty dream, such as one can imagine a Danish girl alone dreaming, but the oddest thing about it was to come literally true. Or, you may say, that Miss Walther took a practical hint from it, and determined to fulfil it. Even so, there are few of us that are favored with dreams that thus circumstantially, and with such wisdom, plan out for us our future lives.

An Appreciation

Miss Walther's life from then to the present time has been a literal fulfilment of that dream. In Copenhagen she was apprenticed to the millinery business. As soon as she had thoroughly learned that, she held in her skilled fingers the talisman which was to carry her around the world. Other milliner's assistants took it for granted that, having found a job, the only thing to do was to keep on holding it. But the little dreamer, Anna Walther, had a very different idea. With a trade in her fingers, what was to hinder her plying it wherever she chose!

The feasibility of her scheme of adventure—a picturesque romance, with a needle-and-thread for weapons instead of a sword—was immediately proved. France followed Germany, and even to Russia and South Africa this courageous little Danish swan went swimming on her way.

The story is written in astonishingly easy and idiomatic English. The fact of Miss Walther "milliner-ing" her way through three continents is sufficient to make one want to read her book, but it is the book itself that must keep us reading it. For my part, I cannot imagine any one taking up Miss Walther's "A Pilgrimage with a Milliner's Needle"

without being caught by the vital charm of the narrative, the reality of her effortless descriptions of places and people, and, above all, the "atmosphere" she never fails to convey—be she at Rostow in Russia, or Birmingham, Alabama. Her description of Cossacks putting down a workman's strike in Rostow, and her suggestion of the terror of police surveillance that broods like a black shadow all through social life in Russia, are masterly. Her employers were Jews, and, when, having escaped from the turmoil in the streets, she at length reached home, with the assistance of a friend, "an ominous stillness," she says "brooded over the house as we entered. I feared it was empty. But we found the members of the family, their faces pale, almost ashen, hiding in various parts of the house." This was shortly before Kischinew.—What a shudder she has conveyed in a few simple words, and the same visualizing art pervades the whole "human document," through which too is deftly woven the thread of an elusive love-story, and incidentally, but far from obtrusively, is self-revealed a singularly independent, yet appealing human being.

Merely as the attractively written story of a life, a magnetic "confession," Miss Walther's

An Appreciation

book is an event in the dull tenor of contemporary literature; but as an object-lesson to the modern girl who would be economically free it is nothing short of an inspiring revelation.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

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**A PILGRIMAGE WITH
A MILLINER'S NEEDLE**

A PILGRIMAGE WITH A MILLINER'S NEEDLE

I

FANCIES OF A DANISH CHILDHOOD

*This Story of my Life tells what I wanted,
what I thought, and what I found!*

ONE of my earliest recollections is of the time when, as a child of four or five years, I sat with my doll, Anna Maria, in an oriel window over my father's cabinet and antique shop in Copenhagen; with our noses pressed against the cool pane we "took in" the incidents of the street below.

As I gazed, I begged God to give occupation to the big policeman with the frozen nose, who stood on the opposite corner. I liked to watch him moving in an excited crowd, and the passers-by, not content with asking questions, pushing farther into the mob to satisfy their curiosity by a nearer view of the fracas.

Fancies of a Danish Childhood

Again I entreated God to have "Mam'sel Thidsfordrive," a forlorn creature of Copenhagen, pass by. She was crazy, and, as the story went, became so from grief at the perfidy of an officer, whose love she was. He deceived her and she became a poor wanderer on the streets, a butt for children to tease and ridicule. Her clothes, which she begged, were as eccentric as the fancies of her disordered brain. Odds and ends of lace and faded ribbon were fastened to her short black dress, which clung loosely about her tall, spare figure. The weak vacant face was shaded by thin gray hair, topped by a hat trimmed with a mixture of old flowers and feathers, tilted to whichever side the wind might blow it. Boots many sizes too large were never buttoned, and on one arm she carried a basket filled with cheap caramels.

She loved children and gave them goodies. When in happy humor, she sang and told them stories; when in sentimental mood, she cried and revealed her secrets. Boys sometimes taunted her to exasperation. Then her frantic gestures attracted the policeman's attention. He leisurely approached the scene of agitation and chased the boys, who, running away, gave a cheer for "Mam'sel Thidsfordrive." She,

Fancies of a Danish Childhood

with good humor restored, vanished around the corner, followed by the girls.

Another petition was for the fire engine to rush through the crowded traffic as the gong clanged. Everybody made way for the engine, which was drawn by quick running firemen, who, in large numbers, held on to a rope attached to the engine. The street boys fell in behind and swelled the chorus of the firemen's wild song. I joined in and "Anna Maria" too. I tapped on her stomach, and the apparatus inside that said "Mamma" and "Papa" seemed to take up the refrain, as I played upon it. Leaving the window, I remembered always to wipe off the spot made by my nose upon the glass, for punishment followed lapse of memory.

On a small table in the nursery were piled my favorite story books. Nurse often read as a reward for good behavior. She, too, loved Hans Christian Andersen. I sat demurely in my low chair with "Anna Maria" on my lap, a rapt listener, as nurse read in clear, sweet tones the wonderful adventures. I would have experienced little surprise had the fairies glided into the room.

In imagination, I roamed through vast palaces; lingered with princes and princesses in

Fancies of a Danish Childhood

heavenly splendors. I wondered why the stork failed to drop me into a palace. I longed to be a princess. But of all the stories, the *Traveling Companion* was my favorite; John, the hero, was my ideal, because he was never afraid and was so good that God helped him on in the world and made his dream come true.

In school, geography particularly interested me; but instead of listening to what was being taught, I traced with my pencil, on the map, the wonderful countries which I desired to explore when I grew up. My childish mind delighted in fancies of the wonders and enchantments of the big world, and the map made real the pictures of foreign lands. I longed to pack my trunk and begin my travels.

II

THE DREAM

EVEN at night my thoughts strayed to distant zones. One certain dream left a vivid impression. I dreamed that I was the owner of a large ship, aboard which I visited all the countries of the earth and sold hats, such as had never been matched in real life.

They were created by mermaids as they rested on the lower deck. Their fish extremities were draped in billows of rainbow colored tulle that floated in long streamers, mingling and blending with the fresh flowers and gorgeously colored birds that formed the trimming of the dream hats. Their brilliancy nearly blinded me and I awoke—I could scarcely believe that it had been only a dream.

During the day its memory was constantly in my thoughts, and after dinner the desire to make hats became so impelling that I explored the sacred mysteries of my mother's bedroom. Thrusting daring hands into dressing table

The Dream

drawers, I searched for materials. Bits of lace, silk, velvet, and a cardboard box (the last to be used for frames) were my trophies.

Cozily ensconced in the nursery, I spread the pieces upon my little table in the corner, safe from observation. My fingers tingled with excitement as I cut the materials and heaped them in small piles, each pile to carry out the creation I had in mind.

My back turned to the door, nurse's entrance was unheeded. With the soft tread of a cat she crossed the room to discover my occupation, for I had been busy and quiet for a long time. "Gracious me! you are cutting!" she exclaimed in accents of alarm. She snatched a piece of lace from my hand. "Madame!" she called and ran with the lace through the rooms until she found mother. Both returned, nurse out of breath and pointing toward the small stacks of hats-to-be upon the table. By this time I had cut the cardboard, too absorbed in my work to notice the nurse's excitement until she and mother stood before me, scolding this naughty girl for cutting the rare old lace collar, an heirloom from my great grandmother. Unexpectedly, mother administered a cruel spanking. My first attempt to har-

The Dream

monize dreams with reality ended in many tears.

But the idea still pursued me. During the following days I gathered all the scraps I could find and trimmed hats for my dolls—hats that won the admiration of my playmates. I opened a store in the corner of our yard, and sold my creations for two öre apiece.

Besides designing hats, I passed other pleasant hours in scanning illustrated books of history. The road to these treasures lead to the third floor, where lived an author who owned them. Pretending to visit his mother, I made myself at home in his study and did not mind the dense tobacco smoke rising from Herr B——'s enormous porcelain pipe, which reached to the floor. He rarely noticed my pottering; usually he gave me a book containing difficult words that I could not understand, but with illustrations which made their meaning clear. Frequently I brought my doll "Anna Maria," and placed her in an easy chair.

One day I climbed up to one of the book cases. Herr B—— raised his eyes, arose from his desk and crossed the room. "What are you looking for?" he questioned. I told him, "A book with pictures of palm trees and wild ani-

The Dream

mals." He laughed, lifted me from the chair to his height, and said, "When you are as big as I am, you can go to their country and see the real animals for yourself." As he set me on the floor, I looked at his tall figure, measured him with critical eye from head to foot, sighed and said, "That will take many years." In certain moods my persistent questions annoyed him—this crisis reached, "Anna Maria" and I received our marching orders and were banished without redress or argument. I whispered that he did not want us any longer and rubbed my eyes, reddened by the smoke from his pipe.

III

THE WEAPON

IN my twelfth year I was rudely awakened to the hard realities of life. My father's flourishing business met with reverses, and he was involved in heavy losses. The appraisers came. I understood that the visit meant something serious and infinitely sad. An agony of dread contracted my heart. I knew the trouble was about money and that my dreams of travel and adventure in foreign lands had faded—all hope abandoned—forever gone! Wherever the sheriff's men went, I followed, first through the home, then through the shop. It nearly broke my heart to see the furniture my father had designed and the beautiful antiques, examined and appraised. When they scrutinized an old "*chattel*" inlaid with mother-of-pearl I begged them to let us keep it, as my mother wanted it for herself. But my timid voice was unheeded.

I was most unhappy and my feelings outraged when I entered a shop and the manager

The Weapon

questioned me about the sheriff's sale. My indignation prompted an answer in my haughtiest manner. I imagined that everybody avoided us, now that we were poor. After paying his creditors' claims my father's financial condition was crippled for many years.

We moved into a smaller flat, and opened a shop to sell cheap furniture supplemented by the few pieces of antiques *saved* from the former business. This withdrawal left but scant furnishing for our new home, which seemed but a colony of white beds—eight children must sleep!

My father sought work elsewhere and the burden of carrying on the business fell upon my mother, whose time and strength were already sorely taxed by the cares of house-keeping.

Our servants were dismissed. Mother solved the problem of our changed circumstances by her amiable and quiet way of assuming the added duties.

Father's whole temper was embittered and the cramped quarters of the home irritated and vexed him. Tall and strong, hard work was quite to his liking, but the humiliation of his losses chafed his proud spirit. My eldest sister, Bodil, and I were allotted our share of

The Weapon

work. As she was reluctant to coarsen her white hands by dish washing and scrubbing pots and kettles, the drudgery of these tasks was usually imposed upon me. She contrived to be absent when the time came to do this work, taking her music lesson or practicing. Our quarrels about the distasteful housework ended in my accepting scraps of silk and velvet from Bodil as a peace offering.

My efforts were often crowned with disaster. Those moments of keen agony are still vivid in my memory, when I viewed the fragments of mother's treasured china scattered on the floor, all caused by my unwary feet stumbling over that innocent looking door sill, while my thoughts were traveling beyond the narrow kitchen walls. With the tray still in my hand, mother's quiet touch on my shoulder recalled me to the present danger of her anger. She said, "Be more careful and next time look where you are going." Housework and dreams are not easily combined! In spite of effort and striving our circumstances became more and more strained.

Bodil having been confirmed, it was time for her to earn her living. Although her ambition was to become a famous musician, she reluctantly abandoned it and was apprenticed to a

The Weapon

glove maker—where she broke more needles than her week's wages could pay for. I do not think she honestly tried; she disliked the occupation and was not even ashamed of her failure, but was pleased when mother secured for her a position as saleswoman.

It was not easy to be happy in this station of life, and my longing for foreign countries increased. Day and night I pondered how people lived and looked in those strange lands that I was determined to visit. I knew it was difficult to go away without money, but the burning lust of travel possessed me and I determined to learn a trade by which I could earn the money.

At the age of thirteen I was paid the first money for my traveling fund. A writer, Professor C—— L—— (a former customer of my father's), employed me as an errand girl. Those errands afforded me exceeding joy. I walked proudly with the books under my arm and imagined myself a student. On one occasion I felt very much ashamed when the Professor found me in the park reading a book I was carrying to his publisher, but he took the matter humorously, and said: "Next time let the publisher read it first."

After my confirmation I, too, was to learn a

The Weapon

trade. Mother did not, for a moment, doubt that I ought to be a milliner. The period of long apprenticeship made me impatient. I grew pessimistic; it appeared as if my life was to be passed in a narrow workroom, whose walls were covered with naked wire frames. They reminded me of an iron spider web in which I was entangled. One day the errand girl was out, and, being the youngest in the shop, I was directed to deliver a hat. The customer gave me twenty-five öre as a tip. I handed it back, saying, "I am not the errand girl," but she continued to pack her trunk. "Oh, take a ride with it, anyway," she said. Dropping it in my bank, I thought it would help me to take the ride around the world, and that I would sooner be released from the galling iron web.

My great passion for traveling made me different from other girls. When they boasted of their love affairs, I kept silent, and was happy with my secret project.

Bodil boasted many admirers. She was very attractive, tall and graceful; dreamy eyes were shaded by long lashes; her uptilted nose gave her the appearance of haughtiness, especially when the delicate nostrils expanded under pressure of exciting emotion. This little artifice always caused me intense irritation, which

The Weapon

she never failed to recognize. Since she was accomplished and musical, she was a welcome visitor in the homes of our former rich friends.

One day she confided to me that a baron had proposed to her and would call the following Sunday to ask father for her hand in marriage. She begged my help to make our little home as inviting as possible. When Sunday came we arranged the furniture and hung the draperies in new ways. Our parents were curious to know the cause of this sudden interest in the arrangement of our rooms.

It was like a romance. I was eager to do all that I could to bring about such a great event. Our small brothers I sent for a long walk. To be sure and safe, I made them promise not to come home before it grew dark, and gave them ten öre to buy goodies. Father was persuaded to stay at home to receive a gentleman who would call at three o'clock. A few moments before the appointed hour Bodil left the house. She was faint-hearted, and did not wish to remain during the decisive interview, as she thought father would look with skepticism upon the proposal.

I was in a fever of excitement; the blood rushed to my head, I could not keep quiet. I constantly inspected everything. My mind

The Weapon

was full of wonder that a nobleman was to marry my sister. Mother thought that an event of significance was imminent and I confided to her my sister's secret. She listened to my story rather indifferently. I do not think she considered it seriously. Gradually my excitement died down, the red faded from my cheeks, and I tried to regard the whole affair as a joke arranged by my sister.

The bell rang! The fever reëntered my blood. I opened the door. There before me stood the baron. A stately officer of the King's Guard, tall and finely built, looked at me with clear, blue eyes. "Is your father at home?" he asked. Breathlessly I ushered him into our "nice room" (as we called our parlor), where my father was waiting to receive him. As I retired I left the door ajar, in order to hear the conversation. After the visitor had stated his errand my father desired Bodil's presence. Informed that she was nowhere to be found, he thought it strange since she knew the gentleman was expected. Mother was sent for, and, entering the room, closed the door behind her, which prevented my hearing any further conversation. Imagine my chagrin! I had done all in my power to have everything in readiness to receive our noble guest in a proper

The Weapon

manner and felt such interest in the proceedings; and now, when everything was progressing so beautifully, to be excluded altogether was too much. Finally Bodil returned. "Has he gone?" was her first question. I told her that the Baron was still in the parlor with father and mother, waiting for her return. She appeared to be disturbed, as she knew that our father was stern, and might object, fearing the man of rank was not in earnest.

I slipped in after her and sat in a distant corner of the room. I can see her now as she entered, blushing and timid. Perhaps her embarrassment heightened her delicate beauty. She was so confused, so excited and anxious that the interview should come to an end. Everything was arranged satisfactorily. The exchange of rings took place the following week, and soon after the baron left for South Africa. He retired from the army and went abroad to seek his fortune. His marriage meant the loss of his inheritance.

We younger children were not very proud of our titled brother-in-law. Sarcastic neighbors sneered at pretensions that really were beyond our means. Our friends doubted that the baron would ever marry Bodil, and she herself suffered much at the thought of people's envy.

The Weapon

Indeed the situation became so unbearable that father deemed it necessary to write to his relatives in Germany, requesting them to take Bodil under their protection for a year. They answered that she would be welcome and, as wished, they would find a position for her. Before leaving she promised that all the money she could save should be sent to me that I might join her. Reluctantly I bade her good-by, and rebelled that I was left behind.

IV

A VISION THROUGH THE NEEDLE'S EYE

I WAS unable to regain my usual calm. *Wanderlust* painted pictures that became more and more fascinating and tempting with every letter I received from Bodil in Cologne, and that city became the goal of my longings. The outside world was my life; it called me. I planned for the future. Repeatedly I counted the coins in my savings bank to make them balance with the sum I needed for my outfit.

I must not forget Gerda, that dear school companion, who was as enthusiastic a traveler in her mind as I, but she failed to realize those dreams because homesickness barred the way. In our leisure hours, with arms entwined, we loitered beneath the palms of the Botanical Gardens, picturing imaginary journeys across the border of unknown lands. With excited gayety we shared our adventures in the museums. We were too young to visit Thorwald-

A Vision through the Needle's Eye

sen Museum unattended. For that reason we lengthened our dresses, put up our hair and wore veils. We must have looked like Lilliputian dames. We were mute when the guide was near. Those visits to the museum! Projecting ourselves into the scenes of foreign countries depicted on canvas, Gerda's spirit coveted the hunting of wild animals; I delighted in the thought of collecting relics. Gazing at pictures of fierce animals of the jungles, Gerda would exclaim in her spirited manner, "I am going there, I am not afraid of anything. I am big and strong." "But you will grow homesick in those deserts," I reminded her. Then a tiny wrinkle appeared on her nose. "Oh, it isn't a sickness I need a doctor for," she replied.

A lady with a red guide book caught our fancy (we thought she was just the model for globe explorers), in short skirt, plain blouse and sailor hat with a veil draped around the low crown. To complete the picture her hair was a trifle untidy. We decided to copy her costume when we began our travels. On the way home we fell to discussing how to earn the money for our journey. The adventure proved to be a tedious undertaking. We sacrificed carfare and candy, and worked at night.

A Vision through the Needle's Eye

Many evenings we sat together and crocheted yards and yards of heavy cotton lace for curtains. In our eagerness we crocheted holes in our fingers. We laughed over our wounds and said, "Some day when we are in foreign countries we will remember this time, when we wore kid fingers in the daytime to protect the fingers that worked at night for our adventure."

Some time elapsed before my sister wrote that I might go to Cologne. She had saved the money to buy my railroad ticket, and as I had learned the millinery trade it would be easy to obtain work. My opportunity had come!

Although anxious to leave my home and the atmosphere of poverty, a keen sense of duty pierced my selfishness. My mother must now do all the work, but she strove in her dear, sweet way to console me and said that my eldest brother was old enough to assist her. Little time was required in packing my belongings. Fearing to miss the train I sat with coat and hat on gripping my new satchel, and, as the hour drew near for my departure, sadness possessed my spirit and I looked lovingly at the familiar pictures, books and trinkets that still were left from my golden childhood. They seemed strangely dear, and when farewell was said to "Anna Maria," my beautiful brown-

A Vision through the Needle's Eye

eyed doll, I fancied I could see tears in her eyes. It seemed as if she, too, was conscious that I was going away. "Anna Maria," to whom I had confided my childish joy and sorrow, she, who had never divulged a secret, who, when the cruel sheriff came, had comforted me by silence. When I found they intended to remove our household goods, I had clasped her to my breast, stolen into the maid's room and hidden my dearest "Anna Maria" under the bed. I kissed her again and again as I pushed her back into her little corner. Her appealing eyes seemed to say: "Oh, take me with you to all the beautiful lands about which you have told me."

I left my home and entered the strange world that had tempted me ever since I was a tiny girl. The portals swung open. That which had seemed an impenetrable wall was but a gate through which to pass.

The locomotive whistle sounded and I waved my last farewell to the dear ones I could no longer see. The train rushed on as if it could not bear me quickly enough to the world beyond. It was a gray morning; a thick mist enveloped the earth. The trees were blurred, the fields soft and muddy, but my ardor was not dampened. I was alive to every new im-

A Vision through the Needle's Eye

pression. I spent the next day on the train. Awaking early, I looked upon a glorious morning. I watched the sun gleam among grayish purple clouds. I was awed by the majesty of the mountain scenery. I could not sit quiet. My fellow-travelers, who always seemed dozing, were aroused by my exclamations of delight over the beautiful country through which we passed—exclamations I was unable to restrain. I thought it incredible that these people did not feel the same appreciation of nature that I experienced. I talked incessantly, in a mixture of Danish and German.

V

THE CAMPAIGN AND THE POINT OF ATTACK

“Im Rhein, im schönen Strome
Da spiegelt sich in den Well’n,
Mit seinem groszen Dome,
Das grosze, heilige Köln——”

HEINE.

AS the train slowed up in the station at Cologne, my first thought as I looked out of the window was, “Will my sister be in time to meet me?” Yes, there she was in the midst of a group gathered about a red carpet, leading from the waiting room to the train. Officials were running back and forth expecting the arrival of some royal personage. Everybody stared with curiosity in that direction. I waved constantly with a handkerchief in each hand to attract my sister’s notice.

After greeting each other with joy, we walked to our relative’s home. We crossed a big open square. My heart suddenly seemed to stand still at the sight of the splendid Ca-

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thedral. Speechless, I dropped my traveling bag to the pavement. Near by, a tall, slender Englishman, with a Baedeker, explained to a short fat man in broken German, "Das sein der Dome!" "As if the man couldn't see it!" remarked my sister contemptuously.

The sonorous tones of the bell calling worshippers to holy mass, bore a message for me, too, and welcomed me to my new life. "Let us go inside," I suggested. Lifting my bag, Bodil replied, "Dinner is waiting; you can see more to-morrow." We then crossed to the corner where stands the famed Eau de Cologne establishment, founded by Johann Maria Farina. Curiosity gripped me. I lingered, but not for long; again I was reminded that dinner was waiting. Around that corner we plunged into a labyrinth of narrow old streets, from which numerous towers pointed heavenwards. Still I heard the bell of the Cathedral. How happy I was that my dreams were coming true.

After the joy and bewilderment of the first day, I was glad to retire to my room with my sister, and talk far into the small hours, of home and loved ones, of her future, and of mine. It was past midnight—sleep was far from my eyes; every stroke of the church clock seemed

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the voice of romance, calling to me in the stillness of the night. The sun rose on my new world.

We started early the next morning to "take in" the sights of that holy city, whose history dates back to the time before the Roman decadence. We passed the circular wall built in the Roman age, part of which still remains. We visited century-old buildings and churches, and with rapt attention I listened to our guide, my cousin, relate the interesting legends attached to them. When we passed the ancient church of St. Ursula, I was interested in the legend of the saint, who, at the head of eleven thousand virgins, selected for their grace, purity and beauty, marched to meet the warriors who had immigrated under Maximus. These fair virgins had been chosen to wed these brave soldiers, but losing their way were overcome by the barbarous Huns, in Cologne. As a penalty for refusing to break their vows, these poor victims were cruelly put to death by their brutal captors. There was little beauty in this church; but the bones of the virgin martyrs, preserved in glass cases, made it interesting.

Bodil was bored by these explorations, but good humor was restored when we entered a

The Campaign and Point of Attack

typical *beerstube*, to refresh ourselves. Even there, the walls, the ceiling and the steins depicted history. I did not remain seated but went from room to room admiring the painted, carved and mosaic walls. This interest attracted the attention of other visitors. "She must be a foreigner, or from the country," I heard one whisper to his neighbor. I was unashamed of showing myself countrified.

VI

THE STITCHES OF TIME

IN a week I obtained a position in a millinery shop, but I was not quite satisfied as this shop sold only cheap hats and paid a low salary.

Meanwhile the Cologne carnival was celebrated. For weeks before, all pawnshops were closed as a protection for the poor, who pawn anything they possess in order to buy the desired costumes for the gala occasion.

The three days preceding Ash Wednesday are devoted entirely to amusement. On Tuesday is the great parade of "Prince Carnival." All seriousness gives place to gayety, every one appearing on the street in a costume conspicuous for its beauty or grotesqueness. If no special costume be worn, a fancy hat or other token expresses the wearer's sympathy with the festive spirit of the Carnival. Old and young, rich and poor, abandon all restraint and address one another freely, but without coarseness. When a lady enters a restaurant, a gen-

The Stitches of Time

tleman may steal a kiss, but if she be offended, he knows that she is a stranger and ignorant of the Cologne carnival custom. Here was life! The dark mantle of poverty which had clung so tenaciously seemed to slip away. Each day brought fresh adventures, and I do believe that I noticed everything. The morning after the great parade I saw a man in a ballet dress, sitting on a step—asleep, while a policeman was trying to awaken him. Looking closer, I recognized a chum of my cousin's.

On Ash Wednesday the citizens of holy Cologne go to confession, receive absolution, and begin an earnest life anew.

When I lived in Cologne it was the fashion for ladies to ride bicycles. My sister and I learned to ride, and later, with our cousin, joined a bicycle club. Sundays were devoted to excursions along the banks of the Rhine.

Yes, the Rhine is fascinating—its romances, beauty, historical happenings, and its industries. How I anticipated those trips! I scarcely slept the night before, fearing the weather might not be fine. The party usually called for each other on the route of our tour, as planned. Yodeling from the street was the signal of the cyclist's approach. As the last member joined the jolly crowd all yodeled the

The Stitches of Time

chorus, in the silent morning hour. This was Cologne merriment!

Through the quiet sleeping town we cycled at great speed, until we reached the banks of the Rhine, when we rode more slowly, the better to enjoy the scenery. The roads were wonderfully smooth. Rising on either side of the river were wooded hills; ruins, castles and monasteries crested these hills at intervals, and attached to each was some legend or romance. We often climbed the hills, exploring them and listening to the tales of the guides. The more gruesome the legend, the more vivid the description, the deeper was the impression made upon my imagination. Those tales of mysterious supernatural beings from the Dark Ages became a source of superstitious terror, when, at nightfall, rocks and hills, woods and valleys were lost in darkness, and every sound was startling. I imagined ghosts of the past coming down the hills and dancing before my wheel in the gloom beyond the light of my bicycle lamp.

The winding road led through curious small towns and villages. In the modern ones were broad asphalt streets, lined with beautiful mansions, surrounded by gardens; in others gloomy narrow streets, paved with such large, uneven

The Stitches of Time

stones that we were often compelled to dismount.

The houses, mean and small, were so old they seemed to be falling to pieces. However, people still lived in them, and poked their heads out of the windows to greet us and to make remarks as we passed. One saucy remark I remember—"Oh, what fat legs the ladies have!" This was taken as Cologne jesting also, for short skirts was the adopted fashion for cycling.

Among those dilapidated homes usually stood a picturesque church, and at intervals ruins of gray walls and towers. All this quaintness was hemmed in by hills, rich in legends. Along the roadside we passed old shrines, guarded by the figure of a saint covered with dust and cobwebs, at whose feet burned lighted candles.

The German people express their enthusiastic love for nature by singing while riding, the spell of woodland and river upon them. Our favorite songs on those joyous rides were "Die Lorelei" or "Die Wacht am Rhine," which were echoed from the silent hills; but still more lustily were echoed the strains of "Deutschland, Deutschland über alles."

Rüdesheim lay in a rich and fertile district.



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*RISING on either side of the river
were wooded hills.*

The Stitches of Time

Terraced vineyards covered thousands of acres, from whose luscious grapes the most famous wine in the world is made. These vine-clad hills, with their large clusters of grapes, invited us to dismount and partake of the "Forbidden fruit." We visited a winepress. The proprietor himself explained the process of wine making. He was more interesting than his wine press. My sister remarked my attitude and asked me why I smiled all the time, for there was nothing amusing about it. I answered, in Danish, that the proprietor was so enormous that I could not help comparing him to his big wine casks. Like the tap on the barrel, his little nose came out between two hard, red-apple cheeks. He showed us a large cellar, deep under the ground, where casks holding wine over a hundred years old were stored. We were offered a glass of the rare vintage, to test it. All except myself exclaimed, as they smacked their lips: "Ah! this is a fine one!" For my part, I preferred going into the vineyard and testing the grapes on the vines.

VII

THE THREAD OF DESIRE

BECOMING more familiar with the German language, I applied at one of the leading millinery establishments for a position. The owner requested me to call again the following day, to make sample hats. I was rather distressed by her request. I had been employed in small shops and was uncertain whether my experiment would meet with approval. On the way home my mermaid dream came again into my thoughts, and it was as if I could see again the hats I had sold in my dream. Feeling very nervous I went to the establishment, and trimmed hats upon the success of which my immediate future depended. The work was completed and taken away for inspection—my anxiety was intense. I was so young, and the shop undoubtedly required much of its employees. In a state of suspense I was summoned to the presence of the lady who was to decide my fate. Her face was wreathed in smiles. She said that all my

The Thread of Desire

hats were pretty, and when she asked me how much salary I desired I became so excited that I mentioned a very modest sum, but still a fortune compared to the wages I had formerly received. I was told to return the next morning and begin work as an employee of the firm. I hurried home to tell Bodil the good news. She was surprised, as she had no inkling when I had left her that morning. As she had assisted me with her own earnings, she was glad of my success.

I lived in a world of visions. One day my employer asked me, "Would you like to accompany me to Paris? I am going to purchase materials and study the newest styles." "Like it?" I exclaimed. "Nothing would please me better. All my heart has been yearning for Paris!" Since leaving my fellow workers in Copenhagen my enthusiasm had increased a hundredfold. I was in love with my work, and believed that energy could further the desire for almost everything. To think that I was to travel with the manager! To travel first class, too; but most wonderful was the prospect before me. Paris!

On board the train the passengers observed me, just as they had when I traveled from Copenhagen to Cologne, because it was impos-

The Thread of Desire

sible for me to feign indifference to the changing view. What verdure, what forests and well cultivated fields! Here and there were small, picturesque houses with thatched roofs, and peasants busy pushing their plows. I never wearied admiring the scenery from the window.

The express traveled fast, everything passed. The passengers either slept or talked, but I could not understand why they closed their eyes to all this beauty. I spoke of it to my employer, but she merely smiled, saying that they were all business people who traveled this way several times every year and had become accustomed to the journey. After this I kept my delight to myself.

When I saw Paris for the first time I was bewildered. It seemed so immense and so chaotic, without the slightest semblance of order. Crowds, with no beginning nor end, made my head whirl. We registered at an old-fashioned hotel where the beds were so large they looked like small houses, and so high that it was necessary to use a chair for a ladder when I climbed up into them. During the day we shopped, and I saw chapeaux nearly as charming as my dream hats. In the evening we dined at the hotel with other buyers and spent de-

The Thread of Desire

lightful hours at the theater. I was much distressed that my employer took me home directly after the play. She thought I was too young to see Paris at night. She offered no explanation, but afterwards I appreciated her good motive.

The return trip did not impress me. All the shopping and sight-seeing had exhausted me. Weary and passive, I gazed at the passing landscape with the same indifference as my fellow-travelers.

Soon after my return from France my sister made the final preparations for her marriage. The baron, having been successful in Africa, was now in Copenhagen, where the wedding was to take place. Immediately after the ceremony he and his bride were to leave for Africa. Sister departed for Denmark, leaving me in Cologne.

Work was absorbing and my mind quick to respond to fresh impressions of real things, which in childhood had been imaginary. An increasing delight was to make excursions to all parts of the shores of the Rhine, climbing to the summit of high hills, where I spent hours exploring the old castles, blackened by the passage of centuries. How fascinating to stand where I could see the Lorelei rock—the

The Thread of Desire

wicked Lorelei who charmed and lured fishermen to their destruction. The view was almost sublime. Through the blue mist the vivid flames of the sinking sun turned the gray volcanic rocks into purple masses, blending the many shades of green of the wooded hills, like paints on a palette. Its level rays, glinting far below in the hollow, shed their radiance above churches, towers and ruins, glorifying them. The only sounds were the whistle from the steamboats and the swishing of the water against the shore. With closed eyes, reviewing those precious memories of former days, I was in Paris again. Indeed the world was rich in opportunities. I said to myself, "I do not mind how hard I work, I shall travel and see more." From day to day the thread of unquenchable desire urged me to climb a step higher on the ladder of experience.

VIII

DREAMS VERSUS REALITIES

AMBITION aroused, I left Cologne and secured a position at Wiesbaden. This lovely city, ideally surrounded by orchards and vineyards, possesses many handsome shops, hotels, monuments, and a Royal theater; but most important is the Kurpark, with its mineral springs as the chief attraction. This noted public garden is filled with luxuriant flowers arranged in artistic beds. Tall old trees guard a large lake, on whose placid bosom glide stately swans. Also it holds a noble music hall and spacious Doric colonnade, where I loved to linger to watch rich and famous strangers, of different nationalities, who came to Wiesbaden to be "cured" by the springs.

The atmosphere was charged with a bewildering excitement. Endowed with youth and health and the joy of living, I envied not these poor, rich people, with their crutches and canes, as they made their daily pilgrimages to the "Trinkhalle." I studied them with curi-

Dreams versus Realities

osity—their faces expressed profound weariness. I congratulated myself that I had come to Wiesbaden, not to drink, but to live. Indeed life was sweet. Friends in Cologne sent me letters of introduction to their relatives, who made me feel at home in this strange city.

They invited me to join them on a moonlight excursion on the Rhine. Well do I remember the sound of the whistle as we rushed on board. My heart beat wildly, but why, I did not know. Was something about to happen, or was it the effect of the surroundings? All about was the hum of lively talk and laughter; the orchestra played for dancing. I was entranced. A gentleman approached our group, whom my friends asked permission to present to me. An officer in the German army! I was filled with delight, and, quite unconscious of the others I scanned his tall, handsome figure, while he proudly twirled his upturned Kaiser mustache.

We easily fell into conversation; he begged the next dance. He clicked his heels together making a stiff bow and said, "Gnädiges Fräulein, may I have the pleasure?" I danced with light feet. He must be one of those dream princes created in one's youthful brain. As the last strain of the waltz died away we sat

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in low chairs on the moonlit deck. The cool night air fanned my flushed cheeks, and the distant echo of the music was an accompaniment to the flattering words of my new acquaintance. All too soon eight bells chimed midnight, and our approach to the landing. As we parted he whispered, "Auf Wiedersehen in the Kurpark."

It was a glorious night. An elf had changed the world into dreamland. What did I do the next day? To tell the truth, I, of course, went to a fortune teller. She prophesied wonderful things of my success in the future.

Taking my other palm she regarded me slyly from the corner of her eye: "You will be miserable concerning a man in uniform,—I warn you," she said. How did she know? I gazed intently into her eyes; in my perplexity I asked if it were true, and she nodded her head "Yes." A black cat dozed at the woman's feet. I became excited and stepped with all my force on its tail. It uttered a cry and sprang to the table, upsetting the coffee pot and spilling the brown liquid on the ragged tablecloth. The infuriated old woman, in her rage, dashed after the guilty cat, and broke the solitary dish she possessed with the stick which served as her weapon of retribution. I could

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not refrain from laughing—to see the old creature rushing about, upsetting everything. The frightened canary fluttered excitedly in its cage, pictures on the wall were broken, and dust clouds rose from the window curtains.

“Don’t cry, Mütterschen. Never mind the dish, I will pay for it,” I said. The poor woman was quite ignorant of my share in the havoc. She wiped her tears with her sleeves, and said: “My cat is such a good soul, but sometimes she gets the jumps.” I assisted her in restoring order, for I burned with impatience to hear the end. I held out my hand, and she began: “You are to cross a great water.” She sniffed. “Much trouble you will have through jealousy,” and finished my fortune with, “At the end it will come out all right.” The ending gave me satisfaction. I paid her fee, not forgetting the broken dish. The fun was worth the money. The episode ended in the dark hall by my stumbling over a hidden object and tumbling down the narrow steps, only stopping at the bottom.

Two long days! On the third my fairy prince appeared. Being my first romance I felt very much flattered by his ardent attentions. On waking he was my first thought. I counted the days until I could see him again.

Dreams versus Realities

We strolled down the graveled paths of the Kurpark. His long saber, dragging after him, made a clanking on the stones, or a big cloud of dust on the ground,—and I was proud of it all.

The new adventure was begun. I recall sitting by my window, in the dusk, with closed eyes, reviewing those moments of rapture—the melody of “Über die Wellen”—the rhythmic swaying to its strains filled my heart with love! I pictured our life together, that he would retire from the army and marry me. The example of my brother-in-law, who had renounced his claim to a fortune, for the sake of his love, convinced me of what a man would do for love. I imagined I saw my officer coming up the walk, his sword clanking. When he seemed quite near I came out of my reverie, and my dream prince vanished. Life was a dream, a romance! It became real only when my officer removed to another city—and married a wealthy lady! Thus ended my first love affair, with its joys and disappointments. He had gone.

As I sat alone in the Kurpark, watching the fashionable crowd promenading in front of the concert hall, I yielded to sentimental fancies. I struggled with my thought and reminded

Dreams versus Realities

myself, "Yes, if I had been one of those rich cripples walking about, he would have married me, even so." Sadly I looked toward the path up which he used to come. The sweet scent of roses and lilies perfumed the air. My soul was filled with despair, and bitter was the taste upon my lips. The beauty of the scene made me weep. I turned to the flowers, trees and birds for consolation, not to weep, too, with me over unrequited love, but to remind me of life and everlasting beauty.

IX

TWISTED THREADS

FROM city to city I journeyed, like a wanderer. Fortunately work was easily procured. I loved that work, and it became my best and most inspiring friend.

A letter from home told me of relatives in Berlin and thither I went. The trip was uneventful; the only thing of concern was that I lost the address of my relatives. I was in a predicament, as I had little money left and hotels were expensive. I arrived in Berlin at a late hour, and was informed there was a home for young girls near the station. It was a most uncomfortable place. More than anything else it resembled a barn with a number of stalls, each of which contained two beds. The lodgers were servant girls, and in spite of the lateness of the hour were so boisterous that it was impossible to sleep. I decided not to undress, but seated myself on the edge of the bed, shivering with fear and fatigue and with one thought in mind; if morning would only come!

Twisted Threads

A storm was raging. The lightning flashed. At times it struck in the distance, vividly showing in sharp lines against the sky. Thunder pealed out in the quiet of the night. The lightning, for the first time in my life, was welcome, as it relieved the blackness. The girls talked of storms and became hysterical; cried, prayed, laughed. But soon the rain came down in torrents, and dashed against the windows like angry waves at sea. Would morning ever come? Could I bear it? I knew I must. I fancied I heard a noise that sounded like a human voice, and when I timidly asked what it might be, was told it was probably an out-cast in the street. I arose, struck a match, and looked at my little silver watch. The hour hand pointed to three. The rain ceased; a stillness prevailed that was akin to death, and it oppressed me.

I was drowsy and tired, and felt a queer fear caused by being alone in uncertain quarters in a strange land. When the first rays of light appeared across the dull sky, I was glad, and immediately arose from my cot. As soon as I felt safe I ventured out to the street. The sky was clear. No traces of the awful night, except the glistening raindrops on the trees. I entered a restaurant for a cup of coffee—after drinking

Twisted Threads

it I felt more hopeful. Calling at the post office I found an answer to the telegram I had sent home the night before. It contained the lost address. I hurried to my relatives who received me with much kindness, but my appearance at this early hour caused great astonishment, as I had been expected the night before. I explained my misfortune, whereupon uncle, who had never set foot outside Berlin, exclaimed with a hearty chuckle, "What a great traveler you are!" and added humorously, "Why didn't you write in your letter what you look like and wear a sign that I could have found you at the station? Remember that next time, Little Wanderer," and chuckled again.

The day after my arrival I began looking for work in the great "Kaiser Stadt." From its magnificence, I realized that I was in the city where the Kaiser reigned; palaces and imposing monuments and soldiers everywhere. On the clean, wide streets moved a continuous compact crowd.

After applying at several places I obtained a position, although I did not find at once the kind that suited me (experience had taught me, when in a strange city, to accept whatever I could get, until I became familiar with local

Twisted Threads

conditions). Little time was lost, however, in securing a better position in one of the fashionable shops. The managers appreciated my work, and I easily won the confidence of the customers.

A young girl in the work room particularly attracted me by her refinement, her love of music and appreciative interpretation of it. She was tall and slim. Her blue eyes set off the dusky blackness of her luxuriant hair. Vivacious, sometimes brilliant, she was popular with men, but she was severely critical. I made friends with Bertha at once, and became a frequent visitor at her home. Her father, old and retired from business, often invited his old bachelor friends to meet his daughter, with the idea of marriage. Bertha always invited me, too, on these occasions, that we both might pass judgment on their good qualities. Whenever the poor victim was an old-fashioned bachelor she would draw me into her room and enumerate his defects. One day I was inclined to take the part of one of these suitors. In a disgusted tone Bertha poured forth, "Didn't you notice that he is bald and bow-legged? Look at the cut of his coat, handed down from one generation to another; and his short trousers!" At this she laughed scornfully, but I

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regarded the affair more seriously. I remembered my experience with the handsome officer and said: "Bertha, I will tell you a story about a girl who loved a man for his handsome face, his glittering uniform and flattering words. All of which appealed to this foolish girl and she was dazzled—dazzled by it all—and then——" "And then what happened?" Bertha interrupted impatiently. "And then he left her, after setting her heart on fire." "What do you mean?" Bertha sneered. "Did she burn up?" "No," I answered; "no, but her heart did." She saw the tears in my eyes. She tenderly wiped them away and said, "You must not let it affect you this way—it was but a story you have told me." "Yes, my own." She wept in sympathy, then began rather severely: "What a horrible creature he was and what a stupid girl you are to think that a German officer, who ranks himself next to a prince, would care for a girl of our class." "Well," said I, "that man in the parlor is not to be laughed at." Bertha assumed her critical expression, and retorted: "Do you mean that I should marry this man, who is neither good looking nor well dressed?" "No," I replied, "I only wish to warn you against counting too much on good looks and correct dress."

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This ended our argument, then her father called us. We joined the guests in the parlor, and Bertha seemed to regard her new suitor in a different light. She never married him!

In return for the hospitality shown me in her home I invited Bertha to accompany me to theaters. Our acquaintance ripened into deep friendship, which displeased the girls in the work room, as we two kept much to ourselves, having nothing in common with them.

One evening we attended a concert at the Philharmonic. We noticed two gentlemen, one of whom was a friendly acquaintance of Bertha's. They looked in our direction. Bertha remarked that, although she knew one of them quite well, she did not like him. She suggested that we avoid them after the concert, and I proposed that we leave before the end of the program. While Liszt's second Rhapsody was being played we left the hall. But fate thwarted our plan. On leaving the Philharmonic we were astonished to see the gentlemen standing on the corner. It was impossible for Bertha to ignore the greetings of her acquaintance, who introduced his companion, Dr. von Bach.

Like Bertha, I, too, had drifted into the habit of criticizing and my first impression of

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Dr. von Bach was not favorable. He wore a slouch hat, a long, loose coat with a cape, which hung to his waist. It reminded me of those worn by farmers. We continued our walk; the conversation became interesting and animated, for the gentlemen were lovers of music. Time passed as the talk grew more fascinating, and the concert not concluded, we decided it was too early to return home. Their invitation to continue our pleasant chat in a Konditorei we accepted. Dr. von Bach removed the long, farmer-like coat, which concealed his imposing figure. The intelligent expression of his face was not marred by the ugly scars left by sword encounters, so prized by German students. His hair, slightly curled, was brushed back from his broad forehead. The frank blue eyes were those of an honest man. Next day Dr. von Bach sent me a beautiful bouquet of lilies of the valley. We made appointments to meet, but hindrances always prevented until it seemed as though we should never meet again. Accident, however, brought us together. At present he was studying jurisprudence, and it would still be a year before he could graduate. I did not return his confidence, but felt that he wished to know my history. He said: "I imagine, from our last

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conversation, you are in Berlin to study music?" I did not believe he meant what he said. Had I really spoken with so much intelligence of the little knowledge I had of music? I inferred from his speech and manner that he was something of a snob, and by that time I had learned that a poor girl does not matter much to a man of rank. I decided to play comedy with him and answered jokingly: "No, I am only a wanderer, like a gypsy or journeyman. I love to awake each morning in a new place." I saw that he took it as a jest, laughed outright and added: "But, gnädiges Fräulein, you are not one of those wanderers with a knapsack on the shoulder and carrying a heavy stick." It was now my turn to laugh at the comparison. I continued this train of conversation and pictured my life as an independent, poor girl, who intended to see the world, its people and their ways. Nevertheless, we met frequently.

X

BROKEN THREADS

A DAY arrived when he appeared troubled and said that he had quarreled with his mother because she had planned his future marriage, and, if thwarted, she intended to cut off his allowance—which meant he would be forced to give up his career, which was his sole ambition. He added that it would take several years before his practice could yield a sufficient income for his needs, without receiving help from his family. He begged that he might retain my friendship, and at the same time declared he could not marry me. He was at least frank! He told me this, sincerely, but my vanity was sorely wounded. I was so amazed at his words that I could find no voice to answer. In saying good-by he kissed my hand, which displeased me. I considered the matter in silence, and resolved that I would withdraw my friendship. But he was so interesting when he spoke in his spirited manner. The officer had talked only of horses,

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soldier stories, and words of love that meant nothing.

That night my whole being was one tumult of revolt. I rushed madly up the six flights of stairs, leading to my lonely room. His cruel words were an insult. I could not excuse them. I climbed to the first landing, repeating vehemently, "He will some day ask me to marry him." Intuitively I knew that this would happen. At the second landing I waited to recover breath, and thought, "How could such a thing be possible?" The next pause but increased my misery. The humiliating truth, "I am poor, not even beautiful," stung, then pierced my pride. My pace slackened. With weary limbs and stumbling feet I gained the top floor. As I fumbled for the keyhole a sudden flare of courage returned, steadying my trembling fingers. "Yes, but you will not become his wife," some instinct persistently whispered.

As I opened the door a heavy scent of carnations filled the room—his peace offering! They softened the insult. I longed to entreat if they meant love, for their color was red, or if they were sent to say that he regretted those words which pricked like needles. I wept because I had no social position, but was only an unedu-

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cated milliner, compelled to fight the bitterness of the world. I stopped to inhale their fragrance and to seek consolation in their freshness. Those vivid blossoms lightened my heart in that moment of distracted grief, for I felt capable of every hazard and a mad desire to reach up to something higher filled my heart and soul.

Success depended upon myself! I would triumph over difficulties. I regained calmness, and peaceful tranquillity over my bruised spirit—time would set all things right. I dried my eyes, and smiled to the flowers. My thoughts wandered to the giver. I thought of him more tenderly, and how he had kept me interested, aloof from the busy, prosaic work-a-day side of life. I was unwilling to lose this happiness and permitted our friendship to continue.

I often met him, who had so recently told me he could not marry me. Each time I recalled his words I grew furious and my cheeks crimsoned. He asked why I was so excited when there was nothing to become excited about. The words stuck in my throat until a saner thought choked them back.

From this experience, "*Liberty and Independence*" became my motto!

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When I reported Dr. von Bach's words to my relatives they disapproved of the continuation of our friendship, and refused to receive him. Nevertheless I continued our meetings and felt that I gained much by association with a man of his intelligence.

When I closed the door of the work room and knew that Dr. von Bach was waiting I felt contented. He brought me books of famous writers. Our walk led through the wonderful wooded Tiergarten. In the light of summer evenings we sat on a favorite bench while he read aloud. I loved to listen to his clear and expressive voice. My thoughts were away from the troubles of my daily life, and the twilight fell all too soon. We strolled homeward through the fashionable Sieges Allee, lined with its marble statues in memory of Germany's victorious kings and famous men of history, as well as of her later statesmen. He related the history of each. This beautiful park ever revealed new beauties.

Dr. von Bach once asked when my birthday came. Under the circumstances I knew a friendship for a long period would be impossible, and felt that my birthday could be of no importance to him. Without considering the matter seriously I mentioned a date at ran-



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*IN the light of summer evenings we
sat on a favorite bench while he
read aloud.*

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dom, and thought the incident closed. I met him at our usual bench near the lake in the Tiergarten when that date arrived. To my surprise he carried a bouquet of white roses, and slipped a ring on my finger. In my perplexity I did not know what to say. He presented these gifts with such solemnity I was ashamed to confess the truth. The truth would spoil his pleasure, and, at the same time, I was enjoying the episode. When I reached home I despised myself. I was humiliated. I resolved to acknowledge my fault and hastened to write him a letter. As I read it I recalled his tenderness as he presented the ring, his happiness as he gazed into my eyes, whispering softly, "Anna, I love you!" Then, in memory, I sat in the Tiergarten which had brought me so many happy hours. I could not abandon this friendship and destroyed the letter, a decision that later was to cause me deep sorrow and suffering.

I longed for the education that circumstances had made impossible. The discourses of learned men appealed to me, and Dr. von Bach, recognizing my desire for higher things, took much pleasure in showing me places of interest. I was glad to embrace the opportunity of acquiring these bits of knowledge, gathered by

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chance. They served but to increase my yearning for more. We spent happy hours strolling through picture galleries, antique shops and museums, in attending lectures and the weekly concert at the Philharmonic. Dr. von Bach preferred the Wagner evenings—they bored me at first. He was surprised to hear me say it was such noisy music, and that I liked Straus and Verdi better. Later, through his interpretation, the “noisy music” became the most ravishing sounds.

We argued on every subject. My ignorance I admitted. I expressed my own ideas, which he said were peculiar, but they amused him. I possessed in a high degree the art of making much out of trifles, and objects which did not interest others appealed to me. While looking at the Indian and African relics I said, “Some day I shall travel in those lands and collect these curios myself!” “Do you mean to go alone?” he asked. “Yes, why not?” I answered. “I wish to achieve by my own efforts, and traveling seems to be the only way to reach the goal.” I looked at him and said sarcastically, “If I loved a man who was my ideal, I might not entertain such wild schemes.” His admiration increased as he realized that I was not simply a pretty little Danish girl to be

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made love to, but that I cherished ambitions and ideals which would sustain and fill my life.

My aunt and uncle guarded me as closely as if I were their own daughter. They endeavored to convince me that it was wrong to continue the friendship with a man of Dr. von Bach's rank if he did not intend marriage. Uncle would say emphatically, "It means nothing to a man like him if he breaks a poor girl's heart and throws it aside whenever he chooses." Whereupon I replied: "He couldn't break my heart because I do not love him." Then Tante would remark in her gentle way, "You must know that when he is among his fine ladies you are out of his mind, and he certainly would not walk with you in public places, where he meets his friends." This made me indignant and I replied that they were mistaken. He did walk with me in public places, and whenever he met his friends I was always introduced to them. They treated me as one of their own rank until they discovered I was only a poor working girl. Then, of course, their manner changed. It was not through Dr. von Bach that they learned that I worked for a living. He cared nothing for their opinion. His regard was unchanged and I was never made to feel his social superiority.

XI

A THIMBLEFUL OF SOLACE

MY success continued. A second trip to Paris followed. If you know Paris you will remember the city as it appears in the evening—the brilliant lights—the bewildering crowds on the boulevards, and the jolly cabby with his red waistcoat and low crowned glazed hat, lolling carelessly in his seat, as he snaps his cruel looking whip which however rarely touches the poor beast in the shafts, as he drives one from the station.

What pictures of luxury the evening revealed. No wonder that Paris is the fashion dictator for the world. Gay crowds on their way to the theater and places of amusement made me long to be rich; to be seated in one of those fiacres, clad in an evening gown as resplendent as my dream could imagine. Artists from the Latin Quarter walked with nonchalant air; their long hair flowing in careless fashion to their shoulders, their wide trousers looking as if the tailor had given them good meas-

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ure, and a soft cravat tied in a loose bow, all combined to make them look very different from the other men. I fancied they expressed the epitome of the artistic temperament. My cabby sang again his favorite potpourri, *Capriccio*, but on this second visit I no longer feared his musical ardor was stimulated by recent potations—"Paris sings and Paris smiles." The belated newsboy crying his final edition "*La Patrie, La Patrie*," had his fascination.

I was sorry when our drive ended. The hotel swallowed us up behind its hospitable doors and shut out the lively street for that night.

We started betimes the next morning to make our purchases. At this early hour, crowds of young women on their way to factories walked in animated groups, their uncovered heads with neatly arranged hair lending a charm to their appearance.

The turmoil of the busy day had begun. A chair-mender blew his horn. Stout horses with teasing bells on their collars drew wagons loaded with wine casks. Three gypsies in native dress won my attention. The first was grinding a hand organ, rolling his big black eyes and shaking his long earrings; another sang, and beat the tambourine with lusty vigor to whose music the third twirled in fantastic

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steps of the dance. The real spirit of life was in the street. The lively streams of omnibuses, carriages and automobiles stopped only to allow pedestrians to cross and recross the wide avenues. From the open spaces masses of humanity surged like waves from one side of the street to the other. The fragrance of violets from the flower girls' baskets perfumed the air. The great hotels, the rich shops, the gay windows of the modistes filled with exquisite hats, drew me like a magnet. I ventured to take notes—for the Paris hats to be made in Germany!

I liked to climb to the top of the high omnibus laden with curious tourists, and listen to their comments. Occasionally as an important building was passed, one would shout, "There it is!" All of us at the same time would lean far over the railing and stare with fresh curiosity. Another reading his Baedeker and pointing downward would exclaim, "Here it is!" An Englishman would say in a dry tone, "Oh, yes," while a German, with passionate enthusiasm would reply, "Ach! das ist prachtvoll." Whereupon all again stretched their necks and looked until we had passed the object. As the bus lurched and swayed, I felt certain I would be pitched over the rail. The



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*I VENTURED to take notes—for the
Paris hats to be made in Germany!*

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novel scenes never wearied me. Life was keen delight.

During my leisure, like most foreigners, I visited Notre Dame. The three deep entrances with their pointed arches, the heavy wooden doors of intricate carving, numerous figures of Saints, Apostles, and frightful looking heads, which I now know are called gargoyles, claimed my first attention. The shabby old beggars standing against the church, making a determined appeal for alms, seemed but another row of dirty looking statues. The interior was enshrouded in semi-darkness. My eyes became accustomed to the gloom. Like a great flower unfolding its petals, the beauties of the Cathedral opened before me. I was transported by its grandeur and magnificence. Through an open door the sound of a bell floated, repeating its low tones, till they seemed to halt above my head for a moment, then died away in silence. I watched the slanting beams of the sun shining through the stained glass windows, touching the statues of saints and changing their tinted garments into more vivid hues. Faded flowers, placed as offerings, seemed to revive in the light. All this made an enchanting picture against the somber gloom. It was evening

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when I left the Cathedral to its shadows and mystery.

At the Louvre, the guide pointed out the Mona Lisa. Her aggravating and mysterious smile was commented on, but I drank in the beauty of those graceful hands that have clasped her secrets to her bosom for more than five hundred years. We were told that Leonardo kept some one near her to sing, to play, or to jest, so that her expression reflected these various moods. Paris without this masterpiece would be bereft of one of its noted art treasures.

Before seeing the incomparable Sarah, I imagined she must be unlike ordinary mortals. When I saw her for the first time in "La Dame aux Camilias," I noted her slightest movement; how she stepped; how she talked; and how she flung herself down on couch or floor. She was more than charming in each attitude. The impression of her acting was so vivid that I could see her distinctly for a long time afterward.

One evening, my employer and his wife took me to a vaudeville performance followed by a dance in the center of the hall, which was separated from the audience by a silken cord, where women of the demimonde danced the can-can. The swirling petticoats and high kicking re-

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flected in the mirrors, made them look like a swarm of misty butterflies fluttering in a flower of lace ruffles as they whisked their skirts around them. Passing on to another hall, lined with alcoves on either side, we watched the gay parties, of piquant women whose eyes shone with love, with hatred or with jealousy. In the niches they talked, laughed and touched glasses filled with champagne, or hummed the melody of the music. Bacchus held high carnival. I, a little stranger, with eyes wide open, at a late hour, saw much and thought much.

Homeward we walked through the stirring and glittering boulevards. Everywhere, men and women thronged restaurants and the out-of-doors cafés. On nearly every table stood glasses filled with a greenish liquid. My employer explained it was absinthe and not fit to drink. "But why do all these people drink it?" I asked. No answer was forthcoming. We wandered through Montmartre, the red sails of the popular mill incessantly turning. Through the darkness of the night the sparkling city seemed to waft an infinite air of pleasure to the pale moon.

At the Grand Opera we heard the "Prophet" as our final indulgence. All the artists were "stars," but to my unsophisticated experience,

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the toilettes of the ladies were far more appealing. The memory of this wonderful Paris was with me even to the "gates" of Berlin.

XII

UNWINDING THE SPOOL OF DESTINY

IT was a fine day in spring. I climbed the hill I called "My Rose." A little rose tree of my own planting grew near the spot where I loved to spend a quiet Sunday morning. The landscape was veiled in young green; the apple trees were in full bloom. Gentle breezes scattered the blossoms, like big snow flakes falling to the ground. Twittering birds flew from tree to tree, picking at the tender shoots; the monotonous sound of the brook chanted a hymn as it joined the echo of churchbells.

People disappeared into the church while I waited on the hill for Dr. von Bach's coming. It was his wont to read aloud to me on these Sabbath mornings. He recited plays that he had written and often acted a rôle, calling on me to take another. He was late. I wondered what could be the reason. The church bells ceased ringing, all nature was in peaceful repose. The enervating spring air filled me

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with a drowsy content. The fairy tale of Snow White stole into my memory. Like her, I fancied myself asleep, to be awakened by a prince who would carry me off to his castle to become his bride. I sat and dreamed of things that happen only in fairy tales, until the church bells once more pealed over the valley and aroused me. I looked around: "Where am I?" but no prince answered. Only a flippant butterfly poised on a trembling spray. I watched the congregation returning from the church, as they slowly walked up the hill. I recognized my prince making his way among them, hat and cane in one hand, while with the other he fluttered a handkerchief. Breathless he reached the top of the hill. "I was afraid you would not be here," he said, and explained that his mother had detained him: "She tried to persuade me to receive the Baroness Herrendorf, who was expected to call, and I knew for what purpose! Before leaving I told my mother what I thought of her matchmaking schemes,—my words but intensified her anger. The last words I heard her say, repeat themselves in my mind: 'I am your mother'." Dr. von Bach told me all this. I was silent, my eyes resting on his excited countenance. His eyebrows drawn together, reminded me of a

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storm not quite over. Then I said: "Yes, she is your mother." In a trembling voice he continued: "Anna, life without you is nothing, it is worse than hell—what is position, money, if you cannot choose the one you love?" I did not reply, but traced on the ground with the sharp end of his cane, these words in my native language: "If you love me, why don't you marry me?" Before he noticed the writing a puff of wind suddenly blew up a little tide of sand obliterating the letters. I pitied him: his love and his ambition for a career were held in prison by a proud, selfish mother. He broke the silence and commenced to read, but dragged the words, his mouth drooping like a punished school boy. Instead of listening my thoughts reverted again to his mother. I imagined her haughty face flushed with anger, and heard her say—in a domineering tone—"I am your mother!"

Suddenly Dr. von Bach said in a tense voice: "Let us go." He folded the manuscript. Each had played his part.

The time approached for his examinations at the university. We parted for a time. Now I recognized what a lonely place the great Kaiser Stadt was, when one's joys and interests could not be shared.

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Occasionally I saw Bertha, but she, too, had changed. My friendship for Dr. von Bach excited her envy, and I found that she was really much the same as the other girls in the shop. I kept to myself. The insincerity of these girls did not disturb me. They gossiped about me, saying I was haughty, but that I had little to justify such pride. The more biting the criticism the greater was my amusement.

After a busy spring season, I spent my vacation in the country with my cousin, who was a school teacher. When the day for the final examination arrived, I was almost as excited as the candidate who had to answer the questions put by the grave professors of the German university, but I felt confident that Dr. von Bach would pass.

A telegram announced that he had graduated with the highest honors. He thanked me for my influence over him and his work, adding that I had inspired him with perseverance and courage.

Seizing my first opportunity I stole away to be alone with my thoughts. Walking along the country roads I left the house far behind, and sitting on a bank I again unfolded the precious paper which chronicled the glad news

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of the successful examination and of my part in it.

I was in a reminiscent mood. I remembered that when I was very young, I found it impossible to fall in love as other girls did. I admired men of achievement, and now I sat here with a telegram that contained glowing words describing my influence over a man whose work would some day make him stand above other men—then I remembered the words, he “could not marry” me. “Why?” I asked. “Because I am poor; because he had not met me in the aristocratic world in which he moved?” The longer I mused on such cruel opinions the more clearly I understood that it would be best for me to go away before my next birthday—my supposed birthday!

This I decided to do.

Returning to the house, I found the family grouped on the veranda, where coffee was served. My cousin’s wife met me on the steps, and inquired where I had been. Encircling my waist, she led me to the table with its steaming coffee pot and homemade cakes.

My cousin’s kindness, the country air and the beautiful environment filled me with such joy, that, for the moment, all thought of the

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telegram, the city and my friend, faded from my mind.

During the return trip to Berlin I questioned myself. Should I go away? My relatives in Berlin cherished rather old-fashioned ideas. They disapproved of my traveling alone. I asked them, "How else could I see the world without money?" My way was at least honorable.

But this was the question! Shall I leave Berlin and lose a good friend—one who has taught me much—and one from whom I am eager to learn still more? The question was still unanswered when Dr. von Bach met me at the station, carrying a bunch of roses. His face beamed with pride and happiness as he described the occasion of his graduation, and then he asked, "Anna, what shall we do with this beautiful day? Let us drive to the Grunnewald." I could not respond to his enthusiasm as I silently buried my face among the flowers in distracted uncertainty.

He slipped his arm through mine as we left the station. "Why don't you answer?" "I am thinking." "Of what?" "Of packing my trunk and going far away." A shadow passed over his face. "I feared this," he whispered sadly. I instantly regretted that I had dis-

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turbed his happy greeting. Smiling, I looked up and said lightly, "I have changed my mind." But I knew our joy would be brief.

My supposed birthday drew near for the second time. I was still uncertain whether to leave the city or to endure the pain of remaining. It was clear that if I went I would lose my friend forever. It was not his love, but his great camaraderie and pronounced manliness which attracted me. I decided to remain and see what time would bring.

When the birthday finally arrived, I invented a number of excuses to convince Dr. von Bach of the impossibility of our spending the day together. But I did not succeed in persuading him to change his intention of celebrating the event. Having invited several of his friends to join us at dinner, he planned meeting me first at our favorite bench in the Tiergarten. I detested that bench and wished sincerely that rain or something else would prevent my keeping the appointment. I thought of a plan to have the bench removed and concealed so that he could not find it. I deeply regretted that I had withheld the truth. It was too late—everything was arranged. His friends had promised to be present—I could only play my rôle once again.

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No rain fell! A cloudless day promised a glorious evening. I walked with throbbing heart to the bench of torture—as I called it in my thoughts. I loitered as long as possible. Through the foliage I saw Dr. von Bach patiently waiting. A bouquet of flowers lay beside him. He was smiling. His look of happiness touched me deeply; I summoned all my courage to take the last few steps. Now that the strain and anxiety of examination were over, his happiness was even greater than it had been last year. After greeting me, he quietly seized my hands as we seated ourselves, and said: "Now, I am going to plan my own future." He was so excited in relating his plans, that unconsciously he pressed and clasped my hands with such force, that I interrupted him. "These are my hands that you are pounding. You must think you are arguing a case in court and hammering with your fist on the desk in your effort to win it." He examined my hands. Red marks showed where he had bruised them. He stroked and kissed them. "Did you suffer all this, while I was thinking only of myself?" then added, "Anna, what do you think of my plans?" "They are all right and sound possible," I answered, "but it may take you years of hard

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work to carry them through," and I looked very dejected. "Darling," he begged, "do not take it so seriously—to-day is your birthday," and he handed me the flowers and a little present which he extracted from his pocket. With astonishment I looked at the gift. I was absorbed in deep thought. "Why do you look surprised? Do you not like this little brooch? I can exchange it;" but my thoughts were fixed on his great future and our separation. My supposed birthday was forgotten. As an excuse for my surprise I replied, "Do you not know that to give a pin to a friend is to break friendship?" He laughed heartily and said, "Don't be superstitious. You always foresee things that no one else believes."

The moments passed, we joined his friends. In spite of my forebodings the dinner was a success.

Following his graduation with the degree of Doctor of Law, Dr. von Bach practised his profession. He was young and there were hundreds of other lawyers in Berlin. His clients were so few that he was glad to accept financial aid from his family.

His first successful case made a sensation. He was counsel for the defendant in a complaint against a group of spiritualists. A fake

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"Flower Medium" was arrested. She claimed that in dancing she could gather natural flowers from the air. She was taken in custody on the stage and the real flowers were found concealed in her skirts. The impresario, who was really responsible, had hypnotized her and then disappeared. Dr. von Bach determined to set her free, and hammered on his desk as he had on my hands in his effort to convince the jury that she had received no profit from her work, but was a poor ignorant woman, of whom the impresario had taken advantage. After winning this case his name became better known, but his progress was slow.

My decision hung in the balance. In the seclusion of my room, I could remember only my troubles and dwell upon my unhappiness until everything seemed wrong. I admired Dr. von Bach but I did not love him, and I resolved to break the friendship. Again the Wanderlust urged me to travel. I discovered new zest in life and rejoiced at the misfortune and the tears that had caused me to seek joy in these roamings.

Let me expect nothing from a man. Let my own efforts be my strength. If I be ambitious, let me prove it by achievement. Tears cannot cure heart ache.

XIII

THE SHEARS OF FATE

MY employer dealt with a wholesale merchant whose kind aid I sought, in obtaining a position as distant from Berlin as possible. He asked if South Russia were far enough. Without reflecting I replied, "Yes, for the present." He knew of a man and his wife from Russia who were now buying goods in Berlin, and were in need of a head milliner. I was assured that they were reliable, for they had been his customers for the past ten years. The prospect was exciting and I eagerly awaited introduction to the Russians. I returned home, enthusiastic with the prospect of going to Russia, as that country had always interested me. I had read about its peculiar conditions, and the opportunity for new experiences in a strange land made a strong appeal.

At an interview in the manufacturer's office the Russians were introduced as Mr. & Mrs. Frölich of Rostoff. I glanced quickly at them.

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I had pictured Russians as big and strong as Samson, black haired and with fiery eyes. Mr. and Mrs. Frölich were just the opposite, both being small; their hair was black, but melancholy brown eyes looked kindly at me. We discussed our business. They appeared to like me and the manufacturer guaranteed my skill. Arrangements were made and I signed a contract binding me to work in their establishment for two years.

I was invited to dine with them in order to become better acquainted and to discuss more fully our plans. A promise to meet Dr. von Bach had entirely escaped my memory. I felt elated that evening, because a door again had opened for me into a new life, and during these few hours it seemed as if I had known my new employers for years. When I reached home I could not go to bed. My excitement was so great that I sat up all night, thinking of the future and the coming separation from Dr. von Bach.

It was far into the night when I stepped through the casement to the balcony. The moon's soft light silvered the tree tops in the beautiful Tiergarten below. Fleecy clouds floated across the heavens and a guiding star blazed in the sky. I asked that star, "Why do

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I not look beyond the horizon of love?" The beauty of the night soothed my troubled spirit. I reasoned with myself. I recalled the happenings through all the months of our friendship. We had been happy indeed. Even when we quarreled no good-by was said until we were reconciled, and now, no more shall I be favored with beautiful flowers; no more shall I smile when he says, "Don't put your face too deep in their petals, insects might creep into your nose."

No longer could I ignore the truth—I loved. The roseate light of the new day dawned before I returned to my room, and with the new-born day came fresh courage.

It was decided that I should leave for Russia two weeks later. I handed in my resignation, and then followed the complicated and tedious business of securing a Russian passport. I was busy, too, adding to my wardrobe clothes suitable to the severe Russian climate, and a letter must be dispatched to my parents. I had great difficulty in explaining about the journey, for my family were opposed to my traveling from place to place. However, my own inclinations were too strong to be resisted. I remember even as a child of four years, demonstrating my independence.

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On one occasion, after being dressed in white frock and blue ribbons, I wished to walk to my father's place of business, but alone. My mother directed the governess to accompany me, but I indignantly refused her escort. She followed me at a safe distance.

An entire week passed, and still I was in no mood to reveal my plans to Dr. von Bach. One evening we sat in a garden restaurant; the orchestra played German folk songs while the patrons joined in the chorus. After a Russian Symphony, I felt inspired with courage to speak of my intended trip.

Dr. von Bach was struck with consternation. His wide, astonished eyes held mine. I drew the contract from my bag, unfolded it and handed it to him. When he caught sight of the red seal he knew it meant something serious. After reading the contract he returned it in silence. I, too, was mute. His face was flushed; strong emotion was evident. The strange gleam in his eyes may have been caused by the music, as if the music itself had spoken. After a moment he said: "It is so, it had, at last, to come." Looking at each other we both had tears in our eyes. We knew that the hour of separation had arrived.

In spite of his love he did not urge me to

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stay, but asked instead, "Am I your ideal?" I longed to embrace him and confess how much I loved him. Instead, I checked the words and in a sarcastic tone said: "I have not yet seen my ideal." He understood, but he was helpless to alter the circumstances, being in bondage to his family. I breathed a sigh of relief. Those words, that pricked like needles, ceased to inflict pain. Leaving the traffic of Potsdammer Platz we turned into a quieter street, and returned to the discussion of my trip. In his present mood he complained about life and said, or rather whispered in a tragic voice, "Anna, I was thinking how bright the world would be had fate not been so cruel, but we pass our lives in doubt and become victims of the inevitable 'too late.' Could we know in time we would alter many things." I could not deny his assertion. We were going around in a circle.—Inexorable fate had decided our destiny—we both realized it. I felt our farewell was for all time.

The letter I received from my parents showed they were unable to view the arrangements I had made from my view point. They feared I had been lured away and that I would end my days in Siberia. I mailed a copy of my contract to them, and explained that these

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merchants were known to the Berlin manufacturer, and endeavored to quiet the fears of the dear people at home.

The day for departure came. The city was enveloped in a mist that turned into heavy rain. The wind moaned and I wept with the heavens. I hated the weeping skies and moaning winds that increased my melancholy.

Evening fell. Dr. von Bach and I dined together for the last time, although he was expected at a function at his home. The Baroness, whom his mother had chosen for her daughter-in-law, was to be his table companion, but he remained with me until my train left at eleven o'clock. As we drove to the station, the rain splashed against the cab door, the lights shone dimly and everything seemed in sympathy with my mood.

As the train started I was so overcome that I was afraid to look out of the window to meet his gaze. I scarcely realized that the train was in motion. Loneliness took possession of me. I found myself weeping and pressing his flowers to me so violently that they fell to pieces.

XIV

NEW POINTS

IN the train were two nuns who tried to soothe me, offering their gentle services. I shook my head and said, "Thank you, it is all over now," and assured them that sleep would be impossible. A glass of wine revived me a little, and I attempted to write a letter, but succeeded in penning only these words:

"Thanks for the flowers.
Do you know why their fragrance is so sad?
They are a fire to my thoughts.

Do you know why my heart is ablaze?
I love you!
My love is like a full blown rose;
And then it falls to pieces. . . . "

The heavens ceased to weep and the canopy of night was studded with millions of stars. The soft moonlight flooded the car and the crushed flowers exhaled a sweet perfume. I could write no more. The monotonous motion of the train lulled me to uneasy slumber.

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The morning was hours advanced when I awoke. After breakfasting, I gazed indifferently at the country through which we were passing. There were many desolate fields where a few cows were cropping the sparse grass. I found a certain measure of satisfaction in watching them, for they served to divert my thoughts.

We changed cars at the Austrian frontier. I took advantage of the hour stop to mail the few words I had written in the night. I was off for Russia! The train was crowded with Polish Jews, whose long beards reached to their waists, and wearing long clerical coats almost touching their feet. They were clean neither in appearance nor in their habits. Their conversation concentrated upon one eternal subject—business. When speaking, their expectation defiled the faces of other passengers. Two ladies sat at the other end of the compartment. I requested a Pole sitting next to exchange seats. The Austrian ladies proved delightful companions. Unfortunately they left the train before the border was crossed. A little after midnight the Russian frontier was reached.

The arrival was a disagreeable experience. Soft snow blew against my cheeks. Many of

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the passengers hastened into other trains, but I stood uncertain what to do. The questions of the custom officials were confusing. They demanded my passport, and asked if I carried books in my baggage. I could not understand a syllable of the Russian language. I handed them my passport which I imagined they wanted. They wrenched from my shaking fingers my handbag, made themselves at home with its contents and finally discovered a book Dr. von Bach had given me. I failed to understand what cause of offense this innocent book might give—but the worst was yet to come. They disappeared into another room with it! An official who spoke a little German, explained that I must show all the books in my possession, as the laws of Russia prohibited the bringing in of books that were in any degree mysterious. My irritation grew almost beyond control. While this tedious examination was taking place I heard the whistle of my departing train. I was informed there would be no other until six o'clock the next evening. Here was I, at the Russian frontier, on a cold autumn night. I almost regretted leaving Berlin, but the thought of the future revived my courage. Calmly I repacked my baggage, which looked as if a cyclone had

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passed over it. The German speaking official sent a telegram to my employers, informing them that I would arrive the following day, and when I inquired about a hotel, he summoned a porter to escort me to one, which could be reached in five minutes. But those five minutes were an eternity. The streets were soft with mud; snow was still falling, and I walked with a strange man on a desolate street, in a strange city. My terror was so great I hardly knew what I was doing. The man stopped in front of a building, dark, except for the faint light from a candle in the hallway. He pressed the bell and went away. I stood where he left me and shivered in the silence. The beating of my heart almost stopped and the blood seemed to congeal in my veins.

I do not know how long I stood there, rigid as a stick. Every sound made me shudder. Finally the proprietor, a huge man dressed in night shirt, trousers and slippers, appeared, his eyes not fully open. He questioned me in Russian. I asked if he spoke German, and he answered in that tongue which made me feel more at ease. He directed me to a large cheerless room, took a seat, questioning me—where was I going and when did I wish to continue

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my journey? He sat at ease, as if he intended to sit there the rest of the night. That gave me another shock. I answered his questions, then told him very sternly that I was tired and desired to be left alone.

When he departed I made sure that the doors were locked. By candle light I inspected every corner of the room. Big, black cockroaches peeped out of holes, near where I held the candle. They ran over the floor. I ran after them and tried to kill them—I resolved not to be afraid of them, but the noise they made when they ran over the torn wall paper made me shiver. Removing the damp and dirty quilts from the bed, I lay down on the mattress. Wrapping my coat around me I soon fell asleep, exhausted from fatigue. By morning the snow had ceased, but the sky was obscured by dull, gray clouds, and everything was drear and cold. I was somewhat bewildered and it required some time to realize where I was. As soon as I recalled the railroad station, the examination of the books, and how I came to be in this hotel, everything became clear. My watch had stopped; I was certain it must be late by the noises in the streets. I could find no bell to summon a maid, but was

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soon ready for the street as I had slept in my clothes.

Upon leaving the room I met the proprietor, who told me that it was one o'clock in the afternoon, that he had repeatedly knocked at my door and was just going to the room to make another attempt to rouse me. When I told him that I had not heard him at all, he envied me the sound sleep. "You must be quite hungry," he said, and led me to the dining room where his wife and daughter sat. The hotel in daylight appeared almost cozy, a counterpart of the little inns to be found in the country districts, where the proprietor soon becomes friendly with his guests. The two women spoke German and were very genial. After dinner we sat in the parlor, an old-fashioned room furnished with a red plush sofa and several chairs, a cuckoo clock, and vases holding bouquets of brilliant paper flowers.

The proprietor's wife suggested that her daughter take me out to see the town, but the streets were so muddy and slippery I preferred to remain indoors.

Upon entering Russia my curiosity was aroused; I wished to find out about its mysterious conditions. After making myself comfortable in a big old-fashioned armchair, I

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asked to be told something about the cruel things that happened in this big country. My question startled the poor woman. Asking about such forbidden things brought a painful flush to her big, round cheeks; her small, glistening eyes looked frightened as she glanced about the room, and with nervous fingers she clutched at her apron quite terrified. In a low voice she said: "O, my dear child! I never talk about things of that nature." Instead, she gossiped of domestic affairs, including all her neighbors, as if they were my acquaintances as well as her own.

As night came on she suggested that the lamp be lighted, but I said I loved the twilight. My hostesses were called away and I was left alone. The warmth of the room infused me with comfort and peace. The fire in the grate glowed like a dying sun; the cuckoo clock slowly ticked off the seconds, and the steaming samovar on the table sent forth the aroma of Russian tea. I cuddled deeper into the armchair and rested. A drowsiness came over me—the barbaric country I was in seemed farther and farther away. Sweet memories returned. In thought I was again in Berlin. I wanted to run back to it. Again the uncertainties of life harassed me. Not that I feared

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the future, not I indeed! But the bitter humiliation that follows an unprotected girl could not be ignored for long.

Bracing myself, I saluted the crushing experiences with a laugh and a cry. In spite of all, the vivid life around me held interest and surprises. The beauty of the world nourished my soul. Providence guided me in this new field.

The little bird in the clock darted out, called the time, then vanished again, closing the shutter behind him. It reminded me to prepare for departure. Suddenly my hostess rushed in, telling me that we must drink our tea and hurry as the train would leave very soon. After drinking her tea, she came to me, kissed my forehead, patted my shoulder and said in a sad and tender voice, "My dear girl, take good care of yourself—don't get into trouble." With her apron she wiped away two big tears and shook her head. I wondered what she was so anxious about, but I became no wiser. (Later I understood what the good woman meant.) She and her daughter accompanied me to the station. Saying good-by, my hostess, in a broken voice which betrayed emotion, said: "Take care! Take care!" As I entered the train I heard her say, "God bless you," and I

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guessed her thought. The good woman added: "What a cruel wind to-night." After placing my baggage upon the shelf, I leaned out of the window to say a last farewell, but the train had already left the station. It glided so smoothly and quietly that I was not aware of its motion. As I gazed into the black night I pondered on the Russian mother's anxiety. Everything was so mysterious, that I imagined I could foresee awful happenings.

In the compartment was a Russian lady and a Polish mother with two children. They carried quilts, kitchen pots and crockery for use on the journey. That night I was aroused from sleep by the fumes of tobacco smoke.—The Russian lady was nonchalantly smoking a cigarette in her berth. I had noticed ash trays fastened to all the berths, but I reasoned that this was a man's compartment, temporarily used by women. I did not know that it was a habit of Russian ladies to smoke in the middle of the night. I spoke to the lady, but she did not understand me and peacefully continued smoking. I was glad when that night was ended, but I dreaded the next.

At meal time the passengers brought out their entire collection of kitchen utensils. No dining car was attached to this train. When-

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ever it stopped at a station, a porter brought boiling water with which the passengers filled their teapots and kettles. I carried no portable kitchen, but when the train stopped longer than usual at a station, I purchased bread and a tin of Russian caviar. My fellow passengers gave me all the tea I needed, and in spite of its uninviting appearance I made an effort to drink it. The Russian lady poured cherry preserves into my tea. I preferred it plain, but she motioned with her hand to her mouth. I thought she meant I should drink "chai" like a Russian. Then she poured the sticky sweetness into each glass. Meanwhile, everybody smoked cigarettes, and stood in groups in the long narrow corridor on which opened little stall compartments. The view from the window was dismal as we rode across the wide steppes, where not even a cow was to be seen.

After the exciting experiences of the past two days my thoughts reverted to Dr. von Bach. It was possible to control my thoughts for only a few minutes. The strange happenings in the train, and the tea makers at the little folding table by the window kept the compartment in a condition of unrest.

The cigarette smoking lady left the train sometime before the evening, and an elderly

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lady took her place. I thought she, at least, would not smoke, but when we prepared for bed, I saw in despair that she, too, drew a cigarette case from her handbag, and I spent another night in a smoke-filled atmosphere. I was tired and fell asleep. If the elderly lady smoked I was not disturbed.

XV

BENEATH THE BRIM OF A RUSSIAN HAT

I ARRIVED at Rostoff on the banks of the River Don. Mr. Frölich met me at the station and soon we were driving in a droshky (as the Russian cabs are called). It was a very small vehicle. The driver was a powerful man, wearing a low hat with bulging crown and narrow brim slightly turned up on the sides. His long green tunic, fastened under the left arm, was confined to his enormous waist by an embroidered belt. A metal badge on his coat bearing a number, gave me a feeling of security which was quickly dispelled when the blooded horses started off, rearing, snorting and plunging. I could not believe the scant harness could hold these steeds that seemed out of all proportion to the tiny vehicle. I feared an accident and clung to my employer, who reassured me by saying that I need not mind the speed, as all droshkies were driven in this seemingly reckless manner. I



*T*ARSKOE Selo Palace.

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made up my mind, however, that I had taken a ride in a Russian cab for the last, as well as for the first, time in my life.

I was received with simple cordiality at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frölich. The atmosphere was one of culture and refinement; the rooms were artistically arranged with costly furniture; books of Jewish history filled the bookcases and most of the pictures expressed abundant evidence that the Jewish faith was highly important in that household. I dressed for luncheon. At table the dainty dishes were keenly relished after the trying experiences on the train. I admitted that I had eaten nothing but dry bread and caviar for the past few days. My experiences amused every one. "Why didn't you get out at the stations and obtain proper food?" asked Mr. Frölich. "Because nobody understood me when I asked how long the train stopped, and for fear I might miss it, as I did at the frontier, I remained in the compartment and made my purchases through the window," I answered.

The family were two boys, eight and ten years respectively. Their southern temperament showed in their excitement over the newcomer, and two pairs of eyes watched me with wonder, all the time I was talking. They wel-

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comed me at once as their friend, and wished to show me all their treasures immediately after luncheon. The older brother's enthusiasm contrasted strongly with the younger boy's quiet reflection of his father's kindliness of manner. Their boyish frankness won my heart, and we entered upon a friendship which lasted throughout my stay in Russia. Setting aside their invitation and the parents' kind suggestion to rest, I expressed a desire to visit the store to meet the employees. The saleswomen were educated and refined. The girls in the workshop were illiterate and ignorant. They were Russians, Greeks, Armenians and Jews.

After the night's rest I was eager to begin my new work. On my way to the store I was approached by an old beggar, bundled in rags and begging for money, but I ignored him as I did not have a kopek with me. In the three minutes' walk from the residence to the store, I met three crippled beggars each one uglier than the other.

It did not take long to feel at home in my new surroundings. Several of the Jewish employees spoke German, thus removing the difficulty as far as language was concerned.

Dr. von Bach wrote saying he had sent me

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a box of books and magazines. I hurried to the customs house. My precious box was there, but, oh, in what condition did I find it! The copies of Shakespeare, Goethe and Kipling, showed no signs of mutilation, but the magazines and newspapers did not fare so well. Pages were completely torn out; newspaper articles, offensive to the censor, were blotted with black ink. I looked at the customs officer. If I could only have said what I thought of the Russian government! Fortunately for me I could not speak the language, so I held my peace, else he might have exiled me to Siberia.

At the other end of the room stood a giant policeman, watching my every movement. His face was almost covered with whiskers, and from under heavy, shaggy eyebrows, glared ferocious black eyes that frightened me. He might arrest me if I dared to complain.

Wishing to mail a registered letter, I asked the girls in the store to direct me to the post office. In a detailed way the desired information was given. I found the place and had hardly entered the building before I saw a shrine ornamented with a picture of a saint. Numerous candles were burning before the picture, and devout worshipers knelt offering candles in prayer. On one side of the entrance

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candles were sold, and on the other side was a basin of holy water in which the people dipped their fingers and crossed themselves before entering further. I thought, by mistake, I had missed my way and had entered a church and retired as noiselessly as possible.

Returning to the store, I said that I did not find the post office, but a church, whereupon everybody laughed. I was told to go farther into the building, that altars are erected in some of the post offices that orthodox Russians might pray and offer candles before mailing their letters—I cannot vouch for this information as accurate. I retraced my steps and entered the building, which, after all, did prove to be the post office, but the odor of the burning candles was suffocating.

My first impression of Russia consisted mainly of beggars and religious observances. Mendicants were everywhere, and as a rule I had a kopek ready to throw to them. But soon this throng became a real nuisance. When I had given a coin to one beggar, he would circulate the news among his fellows, and then I was often surrounded by all the cripples of the neighborhood.

I did, indeed, feel pity for some of them, especially for one man, who, without legs, was

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sitting on the ground, his entire body shaking with hunger and cold. I believed he was suffering from St. Vitus' dance and gave him twenty kopeks. "Poor man!" But when I returned to the store after dinner, I saw this same man, drunk and almost senseless, reeling across the street, on two apparently very well preserved legs! He had already spent the alms in a tavern, and now was on his way to the place where he habitually sat legless to solicit the pity and the aid of the passers by. When I related the incident I was advised to spend no more money in that way. The art of painlessly breaking their limbs to appeal to charity was practiced by professional beggars. They were wrapped in rags so filthy that a rag picker would not touch them with his hook. Unashamed of their trade, they demanded money in a loud voice in these words: "Give in Christ's name!" making the sign of the cross.

Once I saw an old man leading a little girl, hardly eight years old. Two flatirons served as feet. Her lameness was genuine. I was told she had been kidnapped, her legs cut off, and she was now exhibited to excite the sympathy of passers-by. I did not give the man anything, as I had become so accustomed to sights of this kind that my pity died away.

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The two classes of people in Russia are the very rich and the destitute.

I visited churches, not from curiosity, but to admire their beauty. Statues of saints and shrines were bedecked with jewels in such quantities, that I wondered how so many precious stones could be collected in one place. Who paid for this magnificence? Numerous candles were sold daily. Even the pilgrims gave their coppers. These poor fellows, with tea kettles strapped to their backs, after marching barefooted many weary miles, knelt before the holy images, crossing themselves devoutly before kissing the sacred relics. When the fumes from the candles were not too stifling, I remained, hoping to see a miracle wrought by the saints for these devout pilgrims.

There was much to engage my attention, and the long letters coming from Dr. von Bach kept my thoughts active and alert. I re-read old letters. I dreamed of the past: of the thoughtful courtesies and tender words of love that were mine no longer. I turned to my diary for solace.

Wherever I placed my strong affection, I seemed to be doomed to disappointment. I fretted and rebelled, all to no purpose. As I wrote tears fell upon the paper, but did not

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blur my vision. Such relief, for long, was denied me. Swollen lids and dejected mien provoked unwelcome questions from those around me, who feared homesickness was the cause of my evident unhappiness. The burden of my desire was to break the contract, and go back to all that I loved, but, alas, I must remain in this country, so gray, so cold, so cruel!

My employers developed a sincere attachment for me and neglected no occasion to show it. To banish homesickness I was frequently entertained. On one occasion we attended a ball. It was a fine company. The contrast from the ragged bundled up beggars seen on the streets and the magnificence of this scene, made me feel as if I lived in two different worlds.

The ball room was illuminated with brilliant lights, the ladies arrayed in shimmering silks and diamonds; the officers in gala uniforms. Garlands of green, red and yellow lights festooned the hall, and were turned on the dancers during the polka, gallop, or mazurka. The latter was danced with such fury that the clanking spurs could be heard above the orchestra. The dancers appeared as if swinging in flames that blazed stronger and stronger as the excitement grew into madness. These people

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lived—lived in merriment and splendor! Between the dances the ladies sought their smoking room, lounging in easy chairs and on sofas. Dainty little ash trays on small tables were within easy reach.

Through the dense smoke brilliant jewels flashed like fire-flies in a thick fog. Heavy perfume mingled with the fumes from the cigarettes; light, joyous laughter added to the scene of complete abandon.

It was morning when we stepped into the street. My confused senses met a glorious sun, like a colossal urn of gold in the clear blue sky. It was like a beautiful act in a play. The curtain was lowered on the drama of the night and a new scene appeared as we drove homeward. The peasants were coming into town. Some were standing about the scribes on the street corners. I thought, "Poor souls, they are not allowed to learn to write themselves, and are uncertain as to whether they are being treated justly or not."

Others were standing near, eating from a whole loaf of dry bread and chewing on a cucumber fresh from the vine. Beggars in rags were ready for their work. I pulled my evening coat more closely around me. The morning air was cold, but this scene made me shiver.

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I was given tickets when celebrities visited the town, and enjoyed the privilege of hearing the famous Russian opera singer, Chaliapine. His coming caused intense excitement. On the great night my girlish excitement was heightened by wearing Madame Frölich's diamonds. Illness prevented her attending the concert, but she insisted upon my wearing her jewels. I wore no gloves. Like the Russian ladies, my hands and arms were bare to display the diamonds.

The theater was crowded. When the great singer appeared, a thunder of applause greeted him. He looked a true Russian, tall and robust, with blond hair and healthy, ruddy complexion. With a broad smile, he bowed to the right and then to the left. The loud clapping ceased, the orchestra began, and then! that wonderful voice! I held my breath in rapture until the last gracious note died away. Flowers showered upon him from all parts of the house, transformed the stage into a veritable garden. I was so exalted by the exquisite music that I came back to reality only by the pushing and jostling of the crowd upon leaving the theater.

A troupe of peasant players from Little Russia visited the city. I enjoyed seeing

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them for they gave me a picture of life in their particular portion of the Empire. Those players were so gloomy, their life so sad, so dark and monotonous, that it depressed me like attending a funeral. But the scene changed when two dancers in Cherkess uniform unexpectedly dashed on the stage and began the national dance to the accompaniment of strange, weird music. Spinning round on their toes, sometimes in wild temper, or writhing on the floor they raised their daggers as if to kill each other. Although this wild dance produced an instinctive shiver, the music agitated me so, that the more wildly they danced, the more enthusiastic I became. Driving homeward, I did not even mind the desperate speed of the horses. Despite my solemn vow that I would never again ride behind such reckless steeds, the spirit of the dance so wrought upon me, that afterward it became my greatest pleasure to drive through the city and across the endless steppes at a running-away gallop.

The first time the new German governess accompanied us she screamed wildly and wanted the droshky stopped. We had to abandon the ride and walk back to town. After this the two boys refused to take her on their drives,

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so the honor was given to me, and it pleased them to be away from her as she was so strict and eccentric. I entered into a comradeship with the youngsters. This youthful atmosphere made me forget my own age and their boyish spirits dispelled gloomy thoughts. As we drove through seemingly infinite space, we reveled in our freedom with the abandon of children. One day we noticed a hare sitting among the bushes. We had the droshky stopped and all three leapt out and gave chase, amid laughter, shouting and confusion. The poor little hare jumped in every direction; but in the end he escaped. Gasping for breath, and with flushed faces, we enjoyed the sport. Returning to the droshky, we ordered the driver to go as fast as he chose. He was delighted and his horses shared his feelings. He cracked his whip and off we went, galloping wildly through the silent roads and desolate fields. There is a peculiar thrill in flying over the ground at this rate, and I felt in sympathy with the Russian coachman and his horses.

At dinner the older son requested me to look under my plate. As I lifted it I found a photograph of himself taken in his school uniform. After thanking him I placed the photograph on the table. The young collegian a little

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disappointed said, "You didn't look on the back of it." There he had written in German, "I love you."

Often after luncheon I joined the governess and the children for a stroll on the principal streets. The conditions of life in this queer country excited the governess and myself immensely, so that we were always in animated conversation, discussing them. To think that for speaking a word against the government one could be imprisoned or exiled! Visits of inspection were made at night. If one be considered dangerous, he is arrested; if he is found very dangerous, he is sentenced to Siberia. In nearly every family some member is under suspicion as a Nihilist. The government works for its own profit, and the poor people suffer for it all.

We noticed that for several days a certain man had been following us very closely, sometimes walking in front and sometimes behind us. He regarded us intently in his attempt to hear every word we uttered. One day, when his seeming interest annoyed us beyond measure, we informed Mr. Frölich of his strange conduct that had been repeated in our walks. He asked us the subject of our conversation, and we told him that we had talked about the



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SENTENCED to Siberia.

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conditions of the country and about the Czar. He advised us to eliminate that part of our remarks in the future when we walked in public places, as it was quite likely that the stranger who followed us was a spy appointed to report any remarks derogatory to the government. The system of espionage is so thoroughly organized that even in our own house we had to consider our words.

We had lots of fun in our daily rambles. One day we saw a peasant wedding party on a flat moving truck, passing through the street. It appeared more like a traveling circus than a wedding party. On the truck a band was playing; the peasants danced, sang and made a loud noise with kettles and pans from their kitchen treasury. It was their custom upon such occasions to carry with them pieces of furniture, etc. The celebration had evidently reached its height when the truck passed us, as several of the party lay drunk upon it, while others danced and sang, or hammered on their pans to the music of the band. Another time we met a funeral procession which filled us with a feeling akin to horror, for the lidless coffin was borne separately, as was customary, exposing in this instance a hideous old woman, whose face was yellow and crisscrossed with

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numerous wrinkles. All the solemnity of a funeral was lacking and nothing remained but a ghastly spectacle.

We were sorely tempted to comment on the things we saw during our walks, but contented ourselves with a knowing look and a restraining finger upon our lips. That meant, "Wait until we are at home." We dared not speak aloud for fear that some secret service spy was pursuing us. Even when we were safely within our own room, we spoke in whispers, for fear some one might hear through the wall our remarks about the government.

The last leaves of autumn had been swept away. Preparations were made for the real Russian winter. Double sashes were placed in every window; heavy dark red curtains were hung so that no wind might penetrate. Furs were unpacked. The temperature of the rooms was as mild as that of summer, and indoors women wore light summer dresses but outdoors they defied the cold in fur lined cloth pelisse, with the collar turned up over the ears, the fur cap drawn down to the eyes with the face almost concealed, and great furred galoshes protected their feet. Like moving mummies they wandered over the snow. The streets were splendid vistas of unbroken white;



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CARRIAGES were changed to sleighs that glided in
silent swiftness to the clash of bells in the keen
frosty air.

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house tops held their burden of snow; carriages were changed to sleighs that glided in silent swiftness to the clash of bells in the keen frosty air.

One Sunday afternoon Mr. Frölich arranged for a sleighing party. There were four sleighs, two persons in each. The sleighs were small and with the bottom covered with hay and a sheepskin laprobe tucked in snugly, we rode in comfort, defying the cold to spoil our pleasure. The horses were harnessed so close to the sleigh that they threw up the snow into our faces and up on our sleeves; an icy crust covered our fur caps. The big horses sped away like winged creatures, with their light loads, and occasionally dashed into banks of snow where we seemed near upsetting, upon which we screamed and laughed like children in a game.

A stop was made at a little country inn for something to eat. Each plate was piled so high with Russian comestibles that one of the gentlemen (an Englishman) laughed and told the waiter that in England it would be enough for five. The waiter, tall and thin as the Englishman, answered solemnly that this was the reason for the thinness of the English people, but "We Russians," he added, "like to eat

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plenty and that is why we are broad and strong." With a condescending smile the lanky simpleton measured the Englishman from head to foot with his piercing eyes as he walked backward out of the room.

After this heavy meal and with a few glasses of tea, which I drank like a true Russian, we continued our ride. The rocking and swaying of the sleigh was delightful. The fresh-fallen snow glittered like diamond dust. The veiled light of the evening wove vague colorings as we drove through the misty twilight of the forest that looked like an enchanted world. Memories of past scenes which I wished to leave behind flashed through my mind, as the horses galloped faster and faster in the mysterious silence. Freedom and the world was mine! Still on and faster we rode through the desolate steppes, until the black night made us one with the secret life around us.

Days and weeks slipped by. With pleasure I looked forward to the evening; coming home from work a good dinner awaited me. The singing samovar gave an air of comfort to the room. I had become quite intimate with this utensil. The honor of making tea was conferred upon me. The older boy sitting next to me, whispered confidentially, that I was



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THE coming of a scribe who wrote their love letters and
read those they had received.

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the "champion tea-maker." After dinner I frequently stole away to the servants' quarters, to listen to their melancholy Russian folk-songs. Their room seemed to express their songs. It was lighted by a single candle, and on the whitewashed walls was a saint's picture near one of the Czar; their beds, trunks and a small table, the only furniture. I sat on a trunk near the window captivated by their melodies, but feeling a keen sympathy with their servitude. Being unable to read or write, they hailed with delight the coming of a scribe who wrote their love letters and read those they had received, bringing good news or sad. I did not understand. But their faces expressed all their emotions as they listened to the contents, tears alternating with smiles. How forceful are those beautiful words of Tolstoi—"Ignorance is as the night without stars."

It caused me fresh distress each morning as I went to work, to see sitting at the street corners, these scribes to whom the peasantry entering the town with their products, had to refer in all matters that pertained to reading and writing.

I often expressed anger against a system which so unjustly discriminated in favor of one

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class, so that the poor were deprived of the privilege of education. I was curtly admonished to keep silent upon this subject; that the prospect of being deported to Siberia was not more to be dreaded than death itself.

“One must not do as one likes,
Not think as one likes,
Nor write what one likes,—
This is Russia!”

XVI

THE SWORD PIERCES DEEPER THAN THE NEEDLE

ON Holy Saturday, during the Lenten season, while passing a church I noticed people carrying lanterns, walking in procession around the church, as though they were looking for an object on the ground. I followed after and began looking too, but could see nothing. Later I was told on every Easter eve, orthodox Russians look for Christ.

On Easter morning I witnessed a curious ceremony. Each worshiper leaving the church carried an object. Looking closer I saw that it was a home-made cake covered with a napkin. My curiosity was strongly excited. I hurried home and was told that the Russians carried these cakes to church (where they spent the entire night), and before they left the edifice they passed in single file before the priest, who sprinkled the cakes with holy water.

One Sunday morning there was sorrow and

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excitement in the home of my employers, who had heard that the daughter of one of their best friends had been arrested during the previous night. She was accused by the secret police of belonging to a nihilistic body of students, and upon searching her house from basement to attic they had found copies of proclamations. At midnight she was carried away; not even her father was permitted to accompany her to the police station. The following day she was deported to Siberia. That day we all wept.

This happened just before the horrible massacre of the Jews took place in Kishinef, the agitation even reaching our town. Strikes broke out, the populace was in ugly mood, and the authorities deemed it necessary to send soldiers to maintain order at the striker's meetings. At the same time the characteristic Russian hatred of the Jews asserted itself vigorously and dangerously. Six thousand workmen gathered at a place not far from Rostoff to listen to their several leaders. The governess and I were so eager to see the far-famed Cossacks that we ventured to go to the place of meeting. By the time we reached the valley the strikers had assembled; the imposing Cossacks, with their long spears and

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conspicuous uniforms witnessed the proceedings from a neighboring hill. Our purpose in coming was particularly to see the Cossacks, so we climbed the hill, but our coming down was more swift than our going up. An officer approached and questioned us. We merely shook our heads, and said that we did not understand him. I flung out the one Russian sentence I could speak fluently: "Ja ni gah-varyoo pah—rooskee," which meant, "I do not understand Russian." The officer grumbled, "Da-da." The governess chimed in, "Nit chevo." Even this did not convince the soldiers, and they laughed derisively. Evidently the officer suspected that we might be Nihilists, and regarded us with suspicion as he ordered us to leave.

It was a period of unrest. A rumor spread that all rich Jews were to be murdered and plundered on the first day of May. A number of Jews hurried from the town, and my employer, who belonged to that race, feared the worst might happen. He did not leave his business but packed all his valuables in iron bound trunks, which were sent away. Gloomy indeed was the outlook. Each day fresh troops arrived, although for a while everything appeared to be quiet.

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On the first of May, in the early twilight, when the streets were thronged with strikers and soldiers, it suddenly grew dark as night—a cyclonic gale burst over the city. All the stores were hurriedly closed, and while some of the people ran frantically to their homes, many remained in the streets. Instead of hurrying home with the others, I, too, stayed out, and soon reached the main thoroughfare. Along the sidewalks the Cossacks were lined, some of them mounted holding their spears, others were on foot. The strikers walked quietly through the streets, passing the lines of soldiers, and it seemed as if nothing serious would happen after all. Suddenly a tremor of excitement ran through the crowd. Proclamations had been scattered among the people and the Cossacks charged the mob with their dreadful weapons. Running wildly in all directions, to escape, numbers met their death. The whole street was in a mad turmoil of shrieks and curses as the relentless soldiers used their murderous weapons on the pushing, struggling crowd trying to escape to the side streets; piercing cries for droskies were heard on every side, as the mob realized the danger.

Realizing its dangers, I feared, lest I, too, might lose my life and fought desperately to

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leave the crowd, which was packed as close as layers of herrings in a barrel. "In which direction shall I go?" beat upon my giddy brain with no response. I had no idea where I might be. I had lost my way. Suddenly I felt the pressure of a strong hand. In the semi-darkness I could not see who had taken hold of me, and trembling with fear, I expected a cruel Cossack to pin me to the ground with his terrible spear, or drag me away to face a fate more horrible than death itself. What a relief to find the strong arm belonged to an acquaintance of my employer. "Are you alone?" was his anxious question. "Are you hurt? Who on earth allowed you to go in the street on a night like this," he asked in a harsh tone. "Nobody," I replied. Meanwhile the police roughly pushed the crowd, the sidewalks cleared as the frightened people poured into the side streets, and we began to recover our breath. Droshkies now came dashing up from every direction. My stern protector hailed one and quickly hustled me into it, while the other people quarreled and shouted as to who should have it, then following himself, he assured me the danger was past. We drove home at great speed.

An ominous stillness brooded over the house as we entered. I feared it was empty. But

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we found the members of the family, their faces pale—almost ashen—hiding in various parts of the house. My absence had occasioned great alarm, and they reproached me for remaining out, but were happy that no harm had come to me.

Toward ten o'clock the Tartar servant came into the room and reported that the town was quiet, but that the Cossacks had been ordered to remain at their posts all night. The governess and I begged permission to have the Tartar take us out for a walk on the main street, as we wished to see the town after the excitement—and everything was now safe. We gained the coveted permission, but the Tartar had strict orders to see that we returned at an early hour.

The scene of the main street, lined on both sides with soldiers, looked like a review. The full moon shone a symbol of peace after the storm. Its silvery beams accentuated the dead whiteness of the Cossacks' uniforms against the background of night. I was so impressed with their striking uniforms that, some time afterward, I hired one with all the accouterments, in which I was photographed, and treasured the picture as a souvenir of those dreadful Russian days.

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Again the next day there was a stir on the street. This time the Holy Russians moved in endless procession, led by the priests bearing crosses and images. All the church bells tolled, but not in memory of those who were killed and injured during the clash—a saint was honored. To her picture much money was offered as the procession moved on; even the beggars gave their mite.

A few days later the whole world was shocked by the news of the Kishinef massacre, and it was hard to believe that this was an age of civilization, and not one of cruel barbarism. To think of men, women and children being flogged to death or pierced with the sword was dreadful. On one occasion a Cossack officer demanded a stipulated amount from a woman, and when she denied having it she was searched, the money was found on her person and the officer severed her breast with his spear. One's blood runs cold at such tales of horror, and yet this is only one of many instances, each one seeming more horrible than the other.

In Rostoff everybody feared a similar outbreak and an entire month passed slowly before the soldiers were withdrawn from the streets.

Thus ended my first year in Russia.

XVII

THE CALL OF DENMARK

MY parents and Dr. von Bach urged me to leave Russia as they feared for my safety. I quieted their fears by telegraphing that I was safe. I could not deny that all this excitement affected me, and I decided to return to Copenhagen. My employer regretted my decision. He assured me that he and his family had become much attached to me, but admitted, however, that these disturbed conditions were enough to drive any one away from Russia.

To obtain a passport it was necessary to travel to another city. The journey spent in wandering from one office to another just to prove my identity occupied an entire day. The officials, as everywhere in Russia, were extremely suspicious, and a complicated and tedious process of identification was an unavoidable preliminary to leaving this land of secret police, of suspicion and of espionage.

I traveled via Warsaw. Nothing of interest

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happened on the trip. I was so familiar with the peculiar customs of the country that there was nothing new to arouse my curiosity. In Warsaw I stopped half a day and was impressed with its activities. The city would have resembled Paris, had it not been for all the Polish Jews who crowded the streets. They could be recognized a great way off by their enormous beards, by their long narrow coats shining with age and grease, by their queer broad-brimmed hats with big crowns and by their flat shoes.

It was midsummer as I journeyed to Denmark. When the train rolled into my own dear country, what a change of atmosphere! The great forest was filled with beech trees, spreading their ancient branches, under which played the care-free gazelles. The view changed to meadows and fields; the wheat, like a golden carpet, was dotted with red poppies and bright blue cornflowers; here and there the new-mown hay was piled, and the stork, on his long red legs, stepped about, sniffing its perfume.

Little Denmark was so picturesque; its natural beauty so restful—everywhere brooded peace and tranquillity. When I arrived at Copenhagen and felt the firm ground of my

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native country under my feet it was as though I had escaped from prison. Russia now appeared as a place so wild and barbaric that I found it hard to convince myself that I had lived there for a year without suffering any harm.

My parents were astonished to see me looking so well—after my exciting experiences. I laughingly assured them that I was all right, for, while I had lived in fear of unknown dangers, the Russian food and climate were excellent. Mother's loving eyes regarded me with joy. She embraced and kissed me, calling me her poor, dear girl. She had arranged everything with but one thought—my home-coming. My father's financial condition had improved and it was now possible to make our home more comfortable. My room was attractive in blue and white (my favorite colors); the walls, covered with a dainty paper of forget-me-not design, and dotted Swiss curtains were gracefully draped and held in place by blue bows. After dinner we talked far into the night. I was happy to be at home and to speak freely about Russia, without the constant fear of the secret police, whose surveillance challenged one at every turn. In the security of

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Copenhagen I quite enjoyed narrating the dangers of Russia.

I strolled about the bright, home-like city, whose gayety entitles it to be called "The merry Copenhagen." Happy, busy people filled the streets. What a strange feeling it was to be there again, passing well-known places where Gerda (my school companion) and I had spent those interesting hours planning our journey around the world.

I passed Thorwaldsen's museum and lingered a moment. The sun shone on the reliefs of the outside walls. These reliefs pictured the inhabitants receiving Thorwaldsen returning from Rome with all his valuable treasure to present to his country. I tried to think of all the art I had seen in the short compass of my travels. Where had I seen the best? And I said to myself with a proud, patriotic feeling for my country, "Right here in our own Thorwaldsen's."

Gayly I passed over the bridge which crossed the Holmens canal, where fishermen had moored long rows of boats along the quay, and where the fishmarket is held every morning. Fisherwomen in national costume, sitting along the quay, sold live fish, or, collected in groups around the coffee pots, engaged in ani-

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mated conversation. Their heavy skirts of sea-green broadcloth, bordered with red ribbon, swayed about their hips as they moved, and the flapping fishing hoods nodded in sympathy with their chatter. Entering the flower market, I viewed with pride the famous Amager women who had set up their canvas booths. Their community costumes added a gay note to the market square. Their many-colored neckcloths fluttered in the breeze like pennants of freedom. Black satin hoods lined with light blue silk framed their cheerful faces. How picturesque they looked amidst the fresh vegetables and bunches of homely country flowers, which they held up for me to buy, and repressed a twinkle as they assured me of a good bargain. I explained with a smile that I was only sight-seeing.

I longed to call them together and tell them that I had come from barbarous Russia and was here to enjoy with them our freedom. I pondered as I compared my beloved capital with the cruel conditions of the country I had left. No wonder Alexander III. enjoyed his visits to his Copenhagen relatives! So did I, but no secret police accompanied *me*.

I continued through the main streets. The Danish flag, red with a white cross in the cen-

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ter, floated everywhere, making vivid bits of color that gleamed against the dark façades.

I met King Christian IX. on his usual morning stroll through the city. I longed to speak to him about our country, contrasting it with Russia—and smiled at him in my happiness, but failed to make the customary deep bow. However, he lifted his hat. I welcomed every homely scene. Here in the great open square, in the heart of the city, stands the courthouse. The central court is laid out as a flower garden, with a graceful fountain playing incessantly. The gray and white doves from the courthouse tower flew down to the garden where the children fed them. I rested on a bench and called to the doves. Fearless, they perched on my lap and shoulders. While feeding them, it was my mood to fancy they recognized my emotion—that I was a free bird too.

Music sounded in the distance; it was the familiar "Vagt Parade," the band of the King's Life Guard, marching to Amalienberg palace to give the daily public concert, and to change guard, which to me is a striking military spectacle always, in the palace square. I joined the enthusiastic crowd marching to martial music. When we reached the palace there stood the king watching the ceremony from a

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window. I imagined he was looking at me and made my neglected obeisance. This necessitated a long step backward, and when I unfortunately stepped on the foot of some one standing behind me he cried out in pain, "Can't you look out?"

The concert finished, I visited the store where I had been employed four years before. Several of the young girls who had been there at that time sat at the same work table as they had when I left them. I smiled at the thought that my great yearning to see the world had torn me away from this narrow place, for had it not been for my childhood dreams and longings I, too, would still be sitting at that very table without knowledge of the great life that throbbed beyond the walls of the workroom.

I was not yet ready to admit that I had seen enough. I planned other trips and longed for new experiences. I wrote to my sister in far-off Africa, asking if I might visit her. Finally the answer came that conditions were unfavorable; the effects of the Boer war were still felt. She advised me to wait another year, which I decided to spend in Berlin, and I took advantage of the promise in a most gracious letter I had received while in Russia—from my former employer—that my old position was al-



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*A STRIKING military spectacle
always, in the palace square.*

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ways open to me. My relatives welcomed me and my friendship with Dr. von Bach was renewed.

At the close of the year my sister wrote me to come. Her letter caused me to return to Copenhagen for the final preparations for the long journey. The inevitable day of separation had come and I felt I should never return. As I entered the train Dr. von Bach's last words were: "*We shall meet again.*"

This journey was to carry me farther from him, and yet we loved each other more than ever!

"We shall meet again" kept repeating itself in my mind. The words had been uttered so emphatically; as if he had some plan, but was not positive that it would be carried out.

The memory of a happy year filled my mind as the express carried me away; soon the great ocean would be between us and then a wilderness would surround me. No more visits to art galleries and antique shops. What a treat it had been as we strolled through them, and Dr. von Bach explained in glowing words the objects that before I had carelessly ignored. Through his interpretation treasures opened before me a new charm and quaintness. I thought of the beautiful flowers he had

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brought. During the whole year my room had been a veritable bower, as if in compensation for the long, cold Russian winter and the monotonous months of separation. I had loved those flowers; they spoke of love and romance. I had enjoyed the time like a care-free bird.

XVIII

A LONG TIME AFLOAT

EMBARKING at Southampton, I witnessed little tragic dramas of heart-rending farewells. Weeping bitterly the voyagers clasped their dear ones in lingering and tender embraces. Others in high spirits, full of hope and triumph, already glimpsed the vista of a land rich in gold and diamonds. The shore receded—the cloud of waving handkerchiefs became a white speck against the dark shadow of the dock. We quickly turned our attention toward activity, for it is sometimes a tedious task to find and place one's belongings on board ship at the commencement of a long voyage. This difficulty adjusted we explored our floating hotel.

For three weeks this ship was to be my world. For the first few days the weather was gloomy and storms swept the sea. Those passengers who had confidence walked on deck, maintaining their equilibrium as if they were walking a tight rope; others sat in sanctuary

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of corners, deep in thought, with perhaps troubled secrets on their minds. I sought to be alone in sheltered nooks. The immensity of the world and the distance from one horizon to the other where the gray sky and ocean were united deeply affected me. The howling wind and the roaring sea chanted their weird song again and yet again. At times the wind swept to an indefinite distance and rushed back, gathering up the angry sea into foaming waves. It sounded as if innumerable sad voices were moaning together. These sounds depressed me, yet drew me involuntarily to the deck rail, increasing my loneliness.

My poor command of English deprived me of many savory dishes at table. I could only point with my index finger to my favorite viands and to my neighbors' plates, and the attentive stewards supplied what was lacking in speech. Pronunciation was the difficulty, as my school English, learned from textbooks, was quite different from the English I now heard spoken. A kind lady helped me and I was able to speak and understand, somewhat, the language around me.

Soon every one forgot his troubles and made friends. To vary the monotony of the voyage, the passengers formed little intimate parties

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and I became a member of one of these groups. We spent the hours in playing lively games and were ever ready to obey the dinner bell's call. We cheerfully remarked to each other that the company made small profit on our meals.

Every one rose early to catch a glimpse of the towering peaks of Tenerife, but, to our dismay, the atmosphere was hazy and it was nearly midday before we discerned the tops of spire-like objects ahead. The highest peak is twelve thousand, one hundred and eighty feet high. As we neared the Canary Islands we stopped to take on a supply of coal and provisions. Many of the passengers went ashore sight-seeing, but I preferred to stay aboard and watch the natives who carried on their trade from small boats as they rowed alongside the ocean liner, while others established their booths on deck. Handsome willow chairs, needlework, fruits, perfume, soap, flowers, crocheted shawls made of silver thread, fans and kimonos, were heaped in such confusion that the deck looked like a second-hand shop. Naked native boys dived into the water to catch the coins which passengers flung to them. These youngsters swam like fish and were able to remain beneath the surface of the water

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until they found the coins. They seemed almost amphibious in their habits.

When our ship was about to leave the harbor the trade suddenly experienced a boom, as the majority of the passengers at the very last moment decided to buy. The Tenerife needlework was especially in demand and could be bought for a trifle. In offering their wares the natives screamed and shouted in deafening clamor. Bedcovers of lacework, centerpieces, shawls and many other dainty things waved before our eyes, looking like white clouds against the blue sky as they were held up to view from the small boats. The passengers shouted back, "How much?" indicating with their fingers, as many shillings as they thought the article worth.

After stopping six hours the engines began to move. The Islands left behind, the passengers were enlivened by this diversion from the daily routine. Our next stop would be the still distant Cape Town. Immediately after our departure from the Canaries all the passengers exhibited their purchases and amused themselves discussing bargains. The cabins were brightened with fresh flowers. Pink and white camellias were the favorites.

One day passed much like another; no ex-



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NATIVES who carried on their trade from small boats as they rowed alongside the ocean liner.

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citement to invite our curiosity except when shoals of dolphins rose above the water or we spied a whale, whereupon every one rushed to the rail with field glasses. Frequently the whales came so near to the ship that we could see them distinctly, spouting water to a great height.

We were caught in a squall one afternoon. My friends and I sat on the deck in our steamer chairs wrapped in blankets, as we preferred the fresh air to the close atmosphere of the cabins. When the dinner bell rang none felt like obeying the summons—but as I was proof against sea sickness and was quite hungry I asked the steward to serve my dinner on deck. My friends begged me to “go away with my dinner,” as they found it painful to watch me eat while they were unable to touch food. The expression on their faces amused me greatly, and every time a new course was served I praised it, “That this was the best dinner we had yet had on board.” In spite of their apparent desire that I should suffer with them I felt perfectly well after eating. When the weather was ideal we lounged in our canvas chairs, chatting, reading or listening to the whispering of the sea.

A carnival was arranged and prizes offered

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to the wearer of the prettiest, and of the most grotesque, costume. The preparations for this afforded many hours of merriment. Some carried their costumes with them. Others made them of paper or borrowed them from the crew. In the barber shop we bought all sorts of things for the occasion. The shopping was part of the fun. We tried on noses or masks, making ourselves look as comical as possible, so that we left both barber and his shop in confusion.

Religious services were held on Sunday mornings, preceded by a review on deck of the officers, engineers, and all the crew who were not on duty. They wore their dress uniforms and stood in file according to their rank and station. While a bell struck, announcing the service, the captain, accompanied by the superior officers, reviewed the men, who saluted in military fashion. After the review all entered the saloon for the service. Officers and crew were seated according to rank, but the passengers chose their seats irrespective of the class in which they traveled. While the bell rang and the waves dashed against the ship solemn thoughts occupied the minds of all present. The captain read a sermon, a few hymns were

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sung, and we, at sea, remembered the significance of the week's first day.

So passed days on the water.

As we approached Cape Town a row of mountains called the Twelve Apostles rose above the green shore. At Cape Town my party disembarked, while I continued to Durban. Once more we stood together, but to say good-by and probably never to meet again. I received a letter from my sister, saying she had written to a Norwegian clergyman in Durban to meet me on the pier and see me on board the train for Johannesburg.

After the departure of my traveling companions I found more time for reflection and wrote to Dr. von Bach, as I had promised. I described the events and experiences of the voyage, but did not mention a single word of my love, my longing, nor my hope of seeing him again. Our love seemed but a dream. The great water now lay between us.

XIX

BESIDE THE WAY

THE trip to Durban along the coast of Africa was a chain of wonderful views.

In the tranquil water dolphins and porpoises disported themselves above the surface, while seagulls followed in the wake of the ship. Yielding to the temptation of the generous supply of crumbs, they alighted on the deck, showing no fear. The shore was a bewildering forest where birds and wild animals made their homes. The mingled color of the foliage was enhanced by palms and tall grass. Small huts showed at intervals.

When I left home the ground was covered with snow. Four weeks later when I landed on a strange shore the tropical day was in marked contrast. On the pier at Durban crowds waited to welcome their friends—men in white suits and sun helmets, ladies in sheer summer toiles, fresh from Paris, a piquant contrast to the natives' grotesque attire. At the gangway stood officers, smartly dressed in

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white uniforms. The band struck up "God Save the King," amid laughter, cheers and shouting, as friends recognized one another from deck and pier. Handkerchiefs, sun helmets and colored parasols waved in the burning sunlight. As the steamer docked a swarm of Kaffirs rushed up the gangway, jabbering and shouting; jumped on deck among the passengers' belongings, then dashed down again bearing piles of baggage. Meanwhile I waited idly by the rail, looking down upon this extraordinary tumult. As I watched I noticed a clergyman carrying a clumsy umbrella. He came on board. The purser introduced him as my sister's emissary. His assistance was invaluable, especially when the customs officials examined my luggage. Having dined with his family, that kind gentleman suggested a walk through the city. I was eager for the sensation of treading on African soil. Durban was a busy town. Carriages and 'rickshaws dashed past. Zulus, Hottentots, mulattoes and Indians pushed and jostled. Coolies, swinging baskets of vegetables and bunches of bananas across their shoulders, cried their wares in yells and turned their grinning faces in every direction to discover a customer.

The clergyman explained to which tribes

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these natives belonged. It was a merry and lively scene. The Zulus and Hottentots were decked with innumerable beads and rings, and even wore horns fastened on their foreheads—a native ornament much in vogue. Feathers in all the colors of the rainbow covered their bodies, and some of them had painted their legs white. The 'rickshaw boys were the most grotesque; they believed that the more fanciful their dress the more patrons would be attracted to their vehicles. Unexpectedly a circus troop of Hindus appeared in a wagon, advertising, amidst blare of trumpets and the beating of drums, that they had arrived and would give performances which created excitement, interest and commotion.

In the market various goods were exposed for sale. Up and down the aisles the crowds shopped and drove bargains. Coolie-sellers sat cross-legged on the ground behind piles of fresh vegetables, tempting fruits and brilliant flowers; their big black eyes peering at the throng of buyers haggling over the prices. Most interesting were the oriental booths displaying piles of Turkish slippers, ornaments, gilt jewelry, silk handkerchiefs, perfume, drapery, etc. Large patterned Oriental rugs were spread upon the ground. A robust white-

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turbaned Indian cried out that a sale was going on, immediately a crowd gathered around the rugs like flies on meat; buyers and sellers shouting and gesticulating like escaped lunatics in their excitement.

Another section held the meats, and, like the people around the rugs, so the flies swarmed around the meat. Then my attention was caught by an agile "nigger" playing a guitar, at the same time jigging intricate steps with his naked feet and showing a full set of ivories every time he gave a shout of laughter which seemed to come from his stomach.

I was absorbed in these little scenes and lingered till the clergyman called, "Come along." These moving pictures held me and I nearly missed the train. Just before the whistle sounded a Mohammedan came marching majestically along, carrying a big tan umbrella folded like a tent. All his wives followed in line one behind the other like a flock of ducks. I counted twelve women—each one more beautiful than the other—clad in bright silken togas of green, yellow, red, blue and purple, and loaded with massive jingling bangles. The husband with all his wives made such an impression that I stood with wondering eyes. The clergyman waited impatiently

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for me to move on. If he had not taken me by the arm and led me to the train I would, for curiosity, have followed in line behind the Mohammedan wives.

In the compartment of the train sat two ladies dressed in deep mourning. They indulged in no conversation, each being occupied with her own thoughts, probably a great sorrow, and I was fascinated by the picture of life and color that I had just seen. The train stopped at a station. The mourning ladies left their places to greet acquaintances. Two mulatto women—almost white—entered the compartment. One carried a suspicious bundle hidden beneath her coat and I became uneasy. The bundle, or whatever it was, was alive. When the train started the woman unbuttoned her coat, and I had a vague idea that the mysterious object would spring out at me. My fears were groundless. A pretty little kitten jumped out. The ladies returned and were indignant to find the two mulattoes and the kitten and asked me why I had permitted them to enter the compartment, as the law prohibited the blacks from riding in the same compartment with white people. I answered that this was my first trip in an African railway train and that I knew nothing of the law. They

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reported the incident to the conductor who tried to find another compartment for the mulattoes, but without success, and, as the train was not scheduled to stop until morning, there was nothing for them to do but remain with us all night. The kitten, however, was removed, which I regretted, for I liked to play with it. The mourning ladies were much disturbed over the arrangement, but the night passed without any harm to them, though they had slept in the same compartment with the mulattoes.

At the first train stop the women of the unfortunate complexion changed to a compartment set aside for their race. They gained my sympathy because of their refined features and modest dress. To the aggrieved ladies, who finally had triumphed, I did not say a word; I disliked them on account of their attitude toward the poor negroes. The country, with its lofty mountains and numerous mining camps, stretched a continual panorama to Johannesburg.

I was met by my sister, accompanied by her husband and several friends. After exchanging greetings, they were invited to dinner, and we all drove home in cabs, much to my disappointment, as I had looked forward to riding in a 'rickshaw, but I was told that usually

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Kaffirs only rode in them. With gay chatter, and rejoicing over our meeting, we reached my sister's house in the suburbs, where a real Danish dinner awaited us. I was delighted, because I found the English cooking of the last four weeks a poor substitute for home cooking. Fresh green vine leaves in a single row decorated the table, forming a border on the white damask cloth, and a wreath encircled each of the candlesticks. The jolly company welcomed the traveler by a speech and touched glasses and drank toasts to my success. Coffee was served on the veranda, where the animated relation of African chronicles continued till a late hour.

The garden was illuminated with Japanese lanterns. How sweet the evening air, laden with the fragrance of honeysuckle; how important the small lanterns looked in the purple darkness; how musical the sound of the night insect! My world and my love seemed far away. They belonged to the past. A content stole into my heart. I was to begin a new life.

My slumbers, after these pleasures, continued far into the morning; the sun streaming into my room, like a command, urged my rising. After breakfast the garden invited ex-



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*I HAD looked forward to riding in a
'rickshaw.*

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ploration and, slipping on a shade hat, I obeyed its summons. The boundary of the garden was much farther than it had appeared under the gleaming lanterns. In the distance, mountains showed through a dim mist of heat. A tall evergreen hedge surrounded the lawn. Olive, chestnut, fig and gum trees cast a grateful shade. Trees loaded with fruit were a mass of color. On one side of the house the wall flamed with crimson geraniums and purple and white clematis hung over the windows like a lace covering.

I wandered on and on, plucking fruit from the trees and stooping over clusters of flowers to admire their beauty and inhale their perfume. Parting the branches I bent over a plant which I had never seen before—I called to my sister, asking its name. "Oh," she said, "it is a weed and must be taken out." I begged her to leave it because it was so curious. "Yes," she said, "I like it too. It is a plant called 'daca' which the Kaffirs use as a drug. It produces a stupor in those taking it, unfitting them for work for days." As I looked at the mysterious plant a big bee alighted upon it, but flew away laden with its mead. Everything was novel in this strange land. I kept asking myself if this were the garden of my

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dreams or one in reality; the fruit so luscious, the sky so clear, the air so balmy.

As time elapsed my thoughts reverted to other days. Garden parties relieved the monotony of the hot days while at night the cool veranda overlooking the moonlit garden was the meeting place of our friends to rest or discuss questions too serious for the ardent heat of African days.

Absorbed in thought of my old romance, as the cool breeze of the morning stirred the leaves of the trailing vine, I sat in a shaded nook of the veranda. A letter by the incoming post aroused me from my reverie, and with beating heart I recognized Edward's familiar superscription. I dreaded to know the contents; it might cause suffering; but curiosity mingled with unutterable longing forced my trembling fingers to break the seal, and I read:

DEAREST ANNA:

The days since you went away have seemed weeks, the weeks months, yea, have lengthened into years, and my heart has yearned and longed for you. To-day, I have fully made up my mind that I will suffer this torture no longer. I mean to turn my back on all for you.

Now, Anna dear, will you be my wife?

The letter slipped from my hand. Was I dreaming? Could it be true? I wept and

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laughed with joy. I was overpowered by the expression of his deep love. I had always received his avowal of love with skepticism, but now he proved that he was my ideal. As I reread the letter a strange emotion surged through my heart, terrifying me for a moment, but as I glanced at the letter I asked: "Why should I fear when his soul is expressed in his own dear words, and his love is so great that he wishes to marry me in defiance of parental opposition, even to the loss of his inheritance?" I kissed the precious message, and with joy and pride stole into my room and finished the reading. The letter announced that another would follow as soon as he had disclosed his intentions to his parents. If their objections could not be overcome, he wrote, we would be forced to live a life of denial, but at that moment I was oblivious of such practical details and was the happiest girl in the world—I loved everybody and everything.

I awoke before dawn from a restless sleep. I did not know why, but my soul was overwhelmed with dread; that my happiness was in jeopardy was an undercurrent to my dream. The silence of the morning twilight was oppressive. I could not rid myself of the fear,

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that pervaded my dream—that some untoward circumstance would prevent our marriage.

I stepped quietly out to the veranda. The grayness of the dawn enveloped the garden where the cool blossoms lifted their faces to the stars as if joining in early matins. The pale light of the stars faded as the flush of the morning showed on mountain peaks, and the sun, gathering ardor for the day's course, rose in all its splendor. Flowers, stirred by the cool breeze, filled the air with delicate sweetness. A red rose, full blown, still drenched with dew-drops, invited me to pluck it. As I breathed in its beauty I remembered the lines I had written in the train on my way to Russia. I had compared my love to a full blown rose falling to pieces, but now my love, like the rose, was in its glory again. I tenderly kissed the petals; happiness was mine!

My wanderings in these far-off lands perhaps made Edward realize my absence more keenly and now bore fruit in the proposal without conditions. But, like a bird of ill omen, came the thought of that fatal birthday untruth. To explain seemed beyond my power, knowing his extreme aversion to anything that savored of deceit. In answering his letter I expressed my great surprise and happiness, and

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promised I would be as good a wife as I had been a friend and comrade. I confessed that I had deceived him about my birthday all these years.

After the letter was sealed I again hesitated and reopened it. I imagined his reading the last lines, then pushing it slowly aside, with his elbows on the desk and his head buried in his hands, calling back in thought that day of each year which we had celebrated with so much ceremony. "If he be in a sentimental mood he will despise me; if he be in his mere boy's humor he will laugh heartily, and say, 'Didn't my little Carmen play her part well?'" With this hope I sealed the letter and asked my brother-in-law to mail it. I was afraid to trust myself, as I might change my mind again before dropping the letter into the box and wait until after our wedding to confess the little deceit.

I waited anxiously and in great suspense for the second letter that would apprise me of his parents' attitude. His last words at parting, "We shall meet again," repeated themselves over and over in my brain. More than six weeks must elapse before I could expect an answer, but meantime I continued my preparations to return to Germany. Housekeeping,

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which I disliked, now appealed to me as the most absorbing art and all the petty details of domestic life assumed additional interest, as I knew Edward's appreciation of these duties in a woman.

XX

AFRICAN WILDS

MY brother-in-law planned a hunting party of nine. The first two days we traveled by train that brought us to a level country. When we reached the hills, which literally grew out of the ground into mountains, a queer coach drawn by a caravan of eighteen mules was mounted. The change to another set of eighteen mules was the only event of the day's journey. The drive through the long stretches of sand was tedious, for the earth was parched by that acrid heat so common to African veldts; then the dense forests, where only a glimpse of sunlight broke through the curtain of the lofty trees, enclosed us for hours. Open roads, whose borders were edged with gaudy flowers, came into view, and beyond, meadows in which grazing sheep shadowed the vivid green.

A handful of reed-thatched huts hugged the earth. Negroes squatted in hideous attitudes, like naked devils, peering at us pale-faced

African Wilds

Europeans; their black skin, oiled and shining like a polished stove; their kinky hair, parted into aisles and tightly braided in numerous pig-tails, made an upward curve. I thought they must have infinite patience to arrange it in such a fashion. Children playing outside the cabins, among goats, cats and dogs. Men and women balanced with ease heavy loads on their heads; erect and with supple swing of the hips, looking proud and complacent as they carried their burdens.

We reached our destination—a lone farm on the top of a high mountain—in the afternoon of the fourth day. After a welcome by the family, the only white people on the farm, a group of Kaffirs looking like monkeys, were ordered to brush us. The dust on our clothes was so thick it seemed to go in heavy clouds up to the sky—which appeared so near.

We explored the farm and gazed in silent rapture upon the scene below. Upon that mountain, four thousand feet above the valley, we were isolated from the entire world. The sunset threw a soft sheen over the impenetrable wilderness. A silence brooded as if nature slept. It seemed impossible that wild animals roamed below. During our walk we passed a cage for trapping lions, tigers and

African Wilds

leopards. The grim cage frightened me, but the men joked about it as if it were but a mouse trap.

At bedtime a servant handed each of us a candle for use in our rooms. As soon as my door was locked I glanced about the poorly furnished chamber, with its low ceiling and wooden floor sprinkled with sand that crunched under my feet. The only drapery was the mosquito netting hung over the old-fashioned wooden bed. A chair of ancient age stood near a tiny table; the washstand held an enameled bowl and pitcher, and on the white-washed wall hung a picture of President Krüger, which looked as if it had hung there for centuries. Carefully placing the candle on the table, away from the draught, I opened my dear diary, which shared the pleasures and disappointments of all my travels. Stimulated by the thrilling incidents of the hunt, I wrote about the lion cage: "In imagination I can see the beast seize the meat as he enters the cage, his blazing eyes rolling when he discovers his captivity. I have been told that wild animals do not harm man unless attacked, but I am sure the enraged lion would tear us to pieces should he escape." It pleased me to make those notes because I had reached the

African Wilds

place that I had longed for in my childhood. Dreams were coming true, and I seemed to be in perfect accord with life. Even the expression of ideal love that had been only a conceit of my imagination was now a fact. It was all so strange I feared it could not be true. I drew Edward's letter from my bodice, and before the candle sputtered and burned out I re-read it twice. He had asked me to become his wife. It was absolutely true, written in glowing words on the paper. Yes, I knew our love reached higher than the lofty mountain I had climbed, but many things that might happen before he was mine and I was his tortured my spirit.

I recalled the night I rushed madly up the six flights of stairs of my lodgings after Edward had said he could not marry me, and my instinct told me, "Yes, some day he will ask me to marry him, but something will prevent my becoming his wife." I grew melancholy. I welcomed the moon that gleamed a track of light across the dark room. A strain of music from a flute and a concertina floated through the open window. The simple melody whispered, "I am your friend. I am music, come and rejoice with me." It murmured so bewitchingly that I sought the balcony.

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The air was cool and fresh. The thickly growing trees and high grass scarcely moved; all was still. The moonlight invited me to linger. Sounds of night insects mingled with the chanted music from distant native quarters held me captive. Foreboding fear left me; nothing can alter our great love. I fancied the weird melody was an African love song. The wild chant changed with the mood of the players to abrupt scales, flowing out into the green darkness of the silent night in rippling cadences.

Presently a raucous noise rose above the music; the cries of wild animals frightened me! I returned to my room, closed the windows and covered my ears. In fancy I heard the negro melody and was lulled to restful slumber.

At dawn the hunters were called together by a blast of the horn. I was first on the ground to see them start. All the men were called by the nicknames given them during the Boer war—"Snap," however, was missing. He received the name when deprived of his property by the Boers. He had taken the position of dog-snapper (dog-catcher) at that time. These names confused me and several times I caught myself calling him "Mr. Snap." "Snap" was still asleep when the hornblower entered his

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room to "blow" him out of bed. Being half asleep he thought it was the same roaring which he had heard during the night—he quickly joined the party.

After breakfast the hunters examined their guns, and with several gunbearers and plenty of provisions departed for the hunt. We waved good-by and wished them good luck, until the coach disappeared in clouds of dust and the sound of hoofbeats died away. We women remained at the farm until their return.

Nature made her appeal strongly here in this wide open country of the tropics. A wonderland, teeming with life, the glory of fresh morning dew, the smell of wood-smoke and wild flowers. Strange insects and screaming birds of gorgeous plumage wove patches of color against the blue abyss of sky. These rare birds recalled the dream visions of long ago. They resembled the birds that decked my dream hats.

Toward sunset this wonderful land was bathed in a glow that yellowed every bush and tree, till the sudden African night darkened and extinguished the blaze.

One morning there was much excitement. A leopard was caught in a trap set in the high

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grass. The negroes celebrated the capture of their most bloodthirsty enemy by dancing a war dance about him, their yells and piercing cries rivaling those of the savage animals themselves. Their half-naked bodies writhed and twisted as they leaped and whirled around the imprisoned beast.

The hunters returned after a few weeks and we were very glad to return to the amenities of civilization.

As in Russia, so in Africa, novel and strange sights claimed my attention on every side. One day when my sister and I were walking through the streets, it suddenly became dark as night; the town, without warning, was visited by dense swarms of locusts. People sought shelter in their houses and stores, but in a few minutes the insects covered the ground like a thick carpet. Street cars and automobiles rode through the swarms, crushing thousands of locusts at every turn of the wheels. A terrible and pestiferous odor permeated the air from the dead insects, but the Kaffirs soon appeared with large bags, in which they gathered the locusts and carried them to their homes to roast and eat. They considered them very delectable. The locusts return nearly every seven years. When British rule was estab-

lished in the country some attempt was made to fight this terrible plague, but the Boers opposed the plan as they thought they were sent as a scourge from God. Usually these visitations last half a day, when the surviving members of the winged army fly away.

It was not always agreeable to walk abroad. The Kaffirs were intolerably dirty and barbarous. During the Boer reign they were compelled to walk in the middle of the street, but under British administration they are permitted to use the sidewalks.

XXI

THE BAND OF SILENCE

THE six weeks were at an end and I might expect Edward's letter. A feverish excitement seized me as I looked through the foreign mail and found no letter, but I quieted my fears by the thought that the long journey or the answer from his parents might have delayed it. When, at last, it came, I could not control my impatience. Dreadful news surely awaited me. I wished to avoid observation of the joy or the sorrow which the message might bring, and repaired to the garden. Under the shadow of a big tree I threw myself down in a purple bed of wild violets that grew about it, then drew the letter from its envelope and read:

BERLIN, _____

MY DARLING ANNA:

It pains me to write you this, but I must. The enclosed letter from a detective office about you, and also one from my mother to the effect that if I marry you,

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it will cause her death, force me to ask you for an explanation.

You have been my greatest inspiration, my light, and I believed in you implicitly; these charges against you drive me to desperation. It makes me sad to know that you deceived me, ever so lightly, and I can now but think of these other things with some credulity.

I hope you can explain these unfavorable reports. Unless you can clear up this affair, our ways, dear, will have to be separate.

With a heart almost broken, I am anxiously awaiting your reply.

Devotedly,

EDWARD.

I was crushed, humiliated, angry. I put myself in his place. I knew how I would act toward one whom I had loved devotedly, whom I believed to be the soul of honor, one whose name I would defend under every condition or circumstance. The birthday affair seemed too trivial to destroy Edward's faith in me or to give weight to a false report construed by a proud mother to attain her own ends. My rage and despair could find no expression in the human tongue. I hated him. I arose from the bed of violets which I madly trampled upon, crushing the flowers and wrenching away the branches that barred my way. I hated them too.

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When I reached my room I read the letter again, also the one from his mother, in which she implored him to avoid a marriage that would ruin his career and social life. She emphasized in burning words her devotion to him; what a treasure he was to her, how she had gratified his every wish—and now, in return, would he repay her love by wedding an unworthy daughter-in-law? The conclusion of her letter was:

If this disgraceful marriage takes place, you will have my death on your conscience!

YOUR MOTHER.

The detective's letter related stories so dreadful that my mind became confused. In the twinkling of an eye the aspect of the whole world changed. I wept without tears. I crouched, lost in a stupor, till my sister touched my shoulder and asked if I were ill. I started as though aroused from a nightmare. I seemed to hear the roar of the ocean, as if wind and waves had taken up my cry in argument, "She is right." "She is wrong." "She is right." "She is wrong."

I knew nothing for days, but when I slowly regained consciousness I considered my answer to his letter. I determined to make no de-

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fense. He must choose for himself. His mother's death should not be on my conscience.

The day reflected my mood—it had been cloudy and close all morning. I sat by the window facing the mountain. I watched the somber clouds drifting slowly together till the sky was hidden. It grew darker and darker, but no rain fell. A heavy wind closed all the doors and windows in the house with a bang. I tore up the detective's letter and threw the pieces to mingle with the leaves on the ground, to be caught up in the whirlwind. As I sat and compared my life to the whirlwind a heavy crash of thunder pealed out—the rain in torrents struck against the curtained pane, and I wrote this letter:

JOHANNESBURG, Africa.

DEAR EDWARD:

Your letter with enclosures caused me great surprise and indignation, beyond the power of words to describe.

I never associated you with anything so contemptible as noticing a detective's letter, that your mother used as a weapon to separate us.

When respect, admiration and love had reached its height, to have it dashed down so rudely! My pride revolts at the thought.

As much as I love you, as great as is my suffering, as dark as the future seems without you, I refuse a single word in self-defense. You must decide for yourself.

Your sincere and devoted ANNA.

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Time healed the wound, but it was destined to be reopened when, some months later, Edward wrote again.

Your decision of not clearing yourself, filled me with bitterness. I nearly went mad thinking that it was possible that you had deceived me so terribly. In a fever of suspense I waited and hoped you would calm down and write an explanation. I could not work, nor sleep. In despair I went to Monte Carlo to find consolation. I gambled, drank, and came home more wretched and sick. My mother nursed me—at the same time forcing me to acknowledge she was right, that this affair with you was a mistake. I could find no words to controvert her statements. In all my miserable bewilderment I became another person. My mother got the best of me. To cut it short—I am now married to Baroness Herrendorf.

then added:

I still love you! I am deeply grateful for the sunshine you have brought into my life. I have sacrificed my parents for you, as they, in my heart, are dead to me.

I hardly knew what to think—what could it all be about—why had he acted in this way? Had his mother hypnotized him, I wondered—nothing was clear. Every time I tried to find the key to the mystery—it was as if some

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one had blown out a lamp and I stumbled in the darkness groping for the key. I had not defended myself, because I had told a lie, and a German proverb teaches: "When once you tell a lie, you will never be believed again"; for that reason I left the result to Providence. Ah, the hope of the future I had built on lay crushed at my feet! A darkness enveloped me through which Edward's image was visible always. I endeavored to hate him, but I loved him more intensely than ever.

The garden for weeks had blossomed in loveliness; it now seemed a stranger. I had reveled in the thought of its beauty, and loved it. Its essence penetrated my heart and fostered happy secrets. Where was its fascination, its romantic enchantment that had stirred within trees and flowers growing with my love?

XXII

HEAD, HEART, AND HAND

MY distraught appearance alarmed my sister. She induced me to visit friends in the country who owned a large farm, where there was much excitement. Different Kaffir tribes worked on the farm. The Zulus were preferred because they were the ablest workers and showed occasional signs of intelligence. They worshiped in a little church, constructed of tin, with a cross on the roof, and missionaries often visited the farm to instruct them in religion. The missionaries were not particularly welcomed by the whites. The negroes imagined that if they believed in the white people's God, they were equals with their superiors of the pale complexion.—Consequently they refused to work and became abusive when ordered to perform their duties.

Frequently the negroes entertained us with their weird war dances. On one occasion after they had given a performance and had retired to their huts, a fight started among them. A

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Hottentot came running to the veranda where we were sitting, and shouted to the farmer that the others were trying to kill him. Everybody on the veranda hurried away in alarm, but I remained with the farmer to hear the fugitive's tale. Blood was trickling from a deep wound in his temple. The farmer directed him to wash his wound in the river and sleep in a hog pen for the night, and said he would personally make an investigation the next morning. I was astonished that the man did not drop dead, as the wound seemed to be very near to his brain. When I expressed astonishment, the farmer coolly replied, "Such people have no brains, and if they had, their skulls are so thick they would suffer no harm from a stabbing." For hours I lay awake thinking of the poor man suffering in the pen, but the next morning, when he came to the house, he was, to all appearances, as well as before he was wounded.

Another tragedy occurred. A native witch doctor, to whom the Kaffirs came for advice, would tell his patient—if he bore a grudge against him—that he was affected with some dreadful disease. A poor creature was told that he had a devil in his body and that it could be destroyed only by burning it out. The wretched victim related the evil news to his



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***I** REMAINED with the farmer to
hear the fugitive's tale.*

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fellows who straightway dug a hole in the ground, filled it with wood, set fire to it and threw him into it. Certainly not only the devil burned, but also the man. When they saw this fatal result they demanded the arrest of the witch doctor, but he explained to the police, that he could not help it if the Kaffirs believed him—and he was acquitted.

The heat was unbearable and we took long drives into the country. The pleasure of the drive was spoiled for me because of the ugly, naked negroes, who repelled and embarrassed me. On the farm they were required to wear some kind of dress, but in the open country, their attire was nothing more than strings of beads and rings on their ankles, in their ears and noses. Some had such large holes in their ears that they sometimes served as pipe-racks.

My first drive with Mr. Hargard, the farmer's partner, was most disagreeable. All the horrid, naked Kaffirs we met were so repulsive. But as we drove along, my companion did not notice my embarrassment. When we stopped to speak to one, others approached our carriage, staring at me with unblinking eyes and open mouth. I averted my face and fixed my eyes on the horse's ears. When Mr. Hargard finished talking, he turned to me. I

Head, Heart and Hand

still stared in the same direction. "Oh," he said, "is anything the matter with the horse?" "No, nothing," I replied, "but please take me back to the farm." When he discovered the cause of my annoyance, he laughed heartily and remarked, "Don't mind them; after a while you'll get used to them."

To keep out the suffocating heat one day I shut myself in my room, closed all the shutters and pulled down the shades. As I sat soothed by the darkness, my mind resumed its tedious search for the key to the trouble that had brought such unhappiness. I reviewed all the details of my life in Berlin, until suddenly it dawned upon my mind that when Edward announced to his parents his intention to marry me, his mother had sent detectives to the shop where I had worked, to investigate my reputation. This was the basis of the detective's letter.

During my stay in the millinery shop in Berlin, one of the customers had often given me small presents. Once she offered me two tickets for a benefit concert and ball. I knew that Edward could not escort me, as he was engaged with a political meeting for that evening. I knew also, he would disapprove if Bertha and I went alone—he would think it

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improper. Such a temptation! It could not be resisted. Noted actresses and singers were to take part in the program and Berlin's aristocracy was to be present—even princes and princesses. Bertha and I planned to attend the ball in spite of all obstacles. Our preparations of "dressing up" were confined to a toilet of simple white summer dresses with touches of ribbons.

Bertha promised her father to return immediately after the conclusion of the concert. At the grand *fest* we sat in a box among the nobility. We were afraid to talk for fear of attracting attention and were so self-conscious that we imagined the whole audience must be wondering how we came to be there. Once in a while with a low cry of enthusiasm and delight, we turned to each other and whispered, "Isn't it beautiful?" But we forgot ourselves with the rising of the curtain and were absorbed in what we saw and heard.

After the concert the grand ball commenced. It was a wonderful sight—this crowd of richest elegance, its lights and colors, fashionable gowns, flashing diamonds, glittering uniforms and gay faces. It enchanted us. Forgetful of Bertha's promise, we sat in our corner happy but very dignified, watching intently the noble

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guests. We were alarmed when we learned it was four o'clock in the morning, and rode home in a cab. On our way we framed a story that we had been introduced to Count Wedel and Baron Refeld who danced with us and escorted us home, inviting us to go out with them to dinner and to the theater. This story would create the greatest excitement among the girls in the workroom.

Bertha arrived shockingly late at the shop. She had been crying. As she pitched her hat on the shelf, she exclaimed, "Father will not let me go out again." I confessed that my anxious relatives had waited for me, too, and scolded me. They threatened to write home to my father about it. Nevertheless we boasted greatly of the affair to the girls, and of the fine acquaintances we had made. The jealous girls put their heads together in envious gossip. Their remarks amused us; we continued composing romantic stories in which the Count and the Baron bore a conspicuous part. The girls listened to our tales in astonishment, although they remarked, "You cannot convince us those fine men will marry you!" Even when we bought new gloves we showed them to the girls and pretended they were gifts. All this foolishness was the foundation of my distressing

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difficulty, but the solution had never occurred to me till now.

The detective's letter accused me of living a gay life with Counts and Barons, receiving presents from them. It mentioned the ball, but not the innocent way in which I was present. The revelation was given in such dreadful terms that I did not recognize that it was I who had been guilty, and when I read it I felt dazed as one stunned by a blow. Meantime everything went wrong, and now—nothing can be righted. Too late to explain the real facts. What a miserable creature Edward must have thought me, I, whom he glorified as his ideal!

In the darkness that surrounded me I felt that I was buried in a hopeless grave. I cried for help and in reply a voice seemed to answer, "Keep to the truth and you will be helped." "But why should I suffer so much for such trifling, silly acts; or was it such a wicked thing that I had done?"

I stumbled when I arose, still thinking I was in the grave. I struck my head against the door, which brought my mind back to my surroundings. I opened the blind and the shutters. The heat had diminished—a fresh breeze blew in as I opened the window and I breathed

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more freely. I felt released from the weight of mystery.

During all the long night I tossed in restless musing. How wretched life had become through my capricious nonsense.

XXIII

A ROMANCE OF THE DARK COUNTRY

I SOUGHT diversion in the various interests of the farm, taking walks among the negroes' cabins and watching the daily habits of the occupants. The Kaffirs had more than one wife. The wives worked and the husband sat outside the cabin, smoking lazily beneath the torrid sun as a gentleman of leisure, and the lazier he was the more important he considered himself. The women toiled at hard tasks, laughing and chatting as they worked, always in good humor.

Mr. Hargard gave me sound advice when I bought their trinkets. "Money," he said, "is not necessary. They will exchange the articles you wish for any cast off garments. The selections were rings, artistic strings of beads, bone pipes, belts heavily beaded with short bead fringe and curious articles, similar to those I had seen in the museum and always longed to possess. The negroes were childishly elated over the bargains. The vivid color of the gar-

A Romance of the Dark Country

ment enhanced its value in spite of rips and tears.

It caused much merriment to see them use the articles they had received from me, for they adopted peculiar ways of wearing rejected portions of a civilized wardrobe. The men were the most comical. One ebony giant wore my torn green silk petticoat fastened under the breast and tucked up over his shoulder. In one of his numerous braided pigtails was a fancy feather, which nodded with his every movement.

An old man disported himself in a jacket turned wrong side out to show the red striped lining, fastened around his waist, while the sleeves flapped jauntily against his bare legs. Still another decorated his earholes with my red handled toothbrush. These same earholes are stretched when the Kaffirs are very young, and in time droop till they are veritable loops of gristle and skin, touching the shoulders, and carrying objects as large as tomato cans in them. With supreme satisfaction and broad grins they paraded, showing off their acquired finery like mannequins in a fashionable modiste's establishment.

At every turn I met strange experiences. I noticed one of the ladies of the household wear-

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ing a collection of copper bracelets on her arm. It was considered bad taste for white women to wear Kaffir jewelry. I asked her why she wore them and she said, "These copper rings cured my rheumatism." They were very quaint so I asked her in which of the cabins she bought them, as I, too, might have rheumatism. "You can buy them from an old man who makes them better than the other Kaffirs," and pointed out the hut. Approaching the cabin, I thought I saw an animal sitting outside the little tin house. Timidly I went nearer; his kinky hair was snow white and his long, thin arms covered with rings similar to those he was making. His old fingers twisted the rings as accurately as machinery would have done. I bought a dozen and praised his work. Pleased with my flattery he gave me a whole bunch of rings. I, too, was delighted and thought I could help all my friends who suffered from rheumatism.

Returning I met a Jew with a bundle on his back, coming to the farm. He stopped at the first cabin and I lingered to inspect his wares—but what did I see? He slipped a bottle of whiskey to the negroes and secured a high price, in money, for it. It is considered a crime to sell alcohol to Kaffirs, and I thought of report-

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ing the incident to the farmer, but when I reached the farmhouse, changed my mind, because the Kaffirs knew I had witnessed the transaction, and if I revealed my knowledge they would probably kill me, when they found me alone and unprotected.

Visitors from the city and our friends arranged excursions. The largest truck wagons on the farm, made comfortable with clean, fresh straw, were used for these expeditions. We sat on the floor. The lumbering vehicle was drawn by four yoke of oxen. The driver stood, holding the lines; two strapping fellows on either side administered the lash, urging on the patient beasts with shouts while belaboring their heaving sides with a leathern thong, which they curled above their heads like a lasso.

The uneven, stony road—a mere track of a path—led through desert fields, and the lumbering wagon pitched from side to side, shaking us all with its severe bumps over rocky boulders. Feminine screams rivaled the creaks, but all took their medicine with jolly good humor. After an hour of torture, we reached our destination, which was an abandoned plantation, left to revert to its original wilderness state, now a tangle of vegetation.

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It was almost impossible to discover its former state. How refreshing to repose in the shade after the painful glare of the sun. Its ardent rays broke through the openings of the tall trees. Gentle winds cooled the air. The oxen were allowed to have their fill of the luxuriant grass. The wagoner kindled a fire to boil water for the tea.

The ladies spread the luncheon on the grass; the men stretched themselves in the tropical growth for a smoke; a chorus of song birds filled the air with melody. In this perfect idyl we settled ourselves for luncheon, but not for long.

We were forced to return to avoid one of Africa's unexpected storms. Thunder rolled in the distance and black clouds hid the sky, blotting out the sun. The rain might come down at any moment. A gale of wind extinguished the camp fire, and paper napkins, plates and everything danced about in the whirlwind. We jumped after them like grasshoppers in a field of ripe grain. Several hats were blown up into the trees and stayed there. We hurriedly packed our belongings in order to reach home before the downpour. The oxen traveled at their utmost speed, while the thunder crashed above our heads and zigzags of

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lightning flashed through the black clouds. Suddenly the rain descended in long strings of drops, then in torrents. From below thick mud dashed about us as if we sat in a mud bath, and from above we enjoyed a shower bath. The dripping party did not mind their wetting, but regarded the incident as a part of the adventure, and we made fun of each other's mud splattered faces.

Our long visit to the farm came to an end, and my sister and I returned to the city. The last night was fraught with excitement. A band of Chinamen, who had been working in a mining camp, ran away, and for some time had terrorized the farmers in the vicinity. They broke into farmhouses and everybody had become uneasy. During the night my sister was awakened by a noise on the veranda. She aroused me and whispered that now the Chinese had come to this farm. I lay very quiet and listened. I finally slipped from the bed, taking a large revolver from the dresser, ready for action. Life meant nothing to me. I made my way boldly to the window, drew the curtain slightly aside and looked out. In the darkness I distinguished huge moving shadows. I held my breath. Bodil, in an alarmed voice, asked, "What is it?" The shadowy forms

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came nearer and rustled the leaves. They approached my window. The cause of the disturbance was only three cows that had taken a liking to the clinging vine of the veranda. I laid the revolver back again on the dresser, I was not afraid to handle it—it was unloaded! My sister kept it beside her only to frighten burglars.

We returned to Johannesburg. Life in the country had revived my spirits. The farmer's partner asked permission to call at my sister's home. She invited him and the family on the farm to dine with us.

Upon our return we were met at the front door by my sister's servant boy, Penny, dressed in his best clothes. In answer to her question, "Where are you going?" Penny replied he would now return to his own country district home; and with a smile that grew more expansive as he told us that he had enough money to purchase a wife—a chief's daughter. The price was fifty oxen, while for a girl of less distinguished lineage, ten would answer.

We now looked for another boy, but capable servants were rare, and trained ones were unable to change to our ways. They could not comprehend that households differ as well as people. My sister preferred to hire a boy di-

asked, "What

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rectly from the country, in order to teach him from the beginning in her own systematic way. My brother-in-law sent a boy from his office—he thought he could be trained for the house. He was a Kaffir, looked like a monkey, and walked like an elephant. By this time I was so accustomed to seeing queer human beings, that I had ceased to take note of them, but I did find his name—Whiskey—rather odd. These boys are given names by white people when they enter service. The men in the office had christened him “Whiskey.” To me he looked intoxicated every time I mentioned it, so I baptized him, Thirteen, my lucky number.

His first duty was to go into the yard and take a bath at the pump. This successfully accomplished, my brother-in-law inspected him thoroughly, to see that he was clean enough to don the white suit which serving boys wore in European homes in Africa. I was assigned the task of initiating Thirteen in the art of table-setting. It amused me to watch him. I gave him the silver to place. He put a knife in one corner, a fork in another and spoon in a third, but he did not know what to place in the fourth corner until he found a butter knife, which he promptly laid there. Next he piled the remaining silver in the center of the table

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and regarded me with a self-satisfied grin, showing his even white teeth. With a stern look I shook my head—he looked back with scared eyes. I amused myself for a moment then showed him where the silver was to be placed. He stood perfectly still, listening attentively to be sure to do it properly the next time.

We were entertaining two guests on the day he arrived, so he continued to set the table for five. It was evidently impossible for him to understand that only three covers were to be laid when three persons were to dine. One day I asked him what time it was—without answering me, he disappeared into the garden, stood still a few moments looking at the sun, and returned to tell me that it was four o'clock, holding four fingers in the air and grinning. Thirteen was not so lucky after all. At the end of the week he was discharged, since it was impossible for him to learn anything.

Another servant was hired and a Japanese cook, who looked very intelligent and wore gold-rimmed eye glasses. He was carefully dressed, wearing diamond rings as well as a gold watch and chain. There was something strangely mysterious about him, but his efficiency was unquestioned and his conversation

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betrayed wide experience as a traveler. We had seen many interesting things through the window of his room, and while he was engaged in the kitchen one day, my sister and I made a tour of inspection of his quarters. We were astonished to find a number of books relating to military affairs. Besides there were several maps. On the wall hung portraits of military officers, and we decided that he must be a spy.

He amused our friends. When answering the door bell, he opened the door only wide enough to project his little head, then smiled broadly, nodding to innumerable questions while attempting to answer them in broken English. Friends who met with this experience for the first time, did not understand whether they were to be permitted to enter or not. He finally ushered them in with great ceremony and many bows.

The day arrived when we expected our friends from the farm and others guests. I fancied I would like the garden to appear as I would wish it, were it my wedding day. The table was placed under a large arbor, covered with roses and bamboo vines. I decorated it with garlands of flowers and gayly trimmed packages containing paper caps, and strung flags and lanterns from tree to tree.

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All our guests expressed delight at the beauty of the arrangement. Mr. Hargard was particularly impressed and unhesitatingly said he adored the hand that had wrought this miracle of loveliness, and yet he did not seem to enjoy everything as fully as the other guests did. When I asked him if it was the thought of his absent Zulus and Hottentots that troubled him, he took my hand and said, "No, I am thinking of you."

After dinner we repaired to the drawing room, which had been arranged for music and dancing. Mr. Hargard was a fine dancer, and danced with every one except me. I was much disappointed, I felt that evening I must dance and dance. At last he begged for a waltz, then changed his mind and said, "Let us walk in the garden, I have something to tell you," as we stepped through the French window. The balmy night, laden with the fragrance of tube roses and honeysuckle was full of romance. The moon flooded the scene with her silvery beams—fire flies flickered among the trees and the drone of night insects made dolorous music. Within the arbor, we seated ourselves on a rustic bench. Bending over my clasped hands, he folded them in his own

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and told me of his love, pleading with me to marry him.

Surprised and confused at the unexpected revelation I murmured "N-no." "Does that mean no?" he asked. "I am going to London," I hastily rejoined. "Yes, you did mention such an intention while at the farm, but now, I ask you to be my wife." In the silence I sought in vain for the right answer. His earnestness distressed me.

Breaking in on my silence he urged with great agitation, "Why do you wish to drift incessantly about the world? Imagine yourself, just for a moment, in that cold, big London, alone with the difficulties you must face. Here I stand with open arms to enfold you. Let me fight your battles while you rest in the refuge of my strength. Say 'Yes' and we two together will create an earthly Paradise on the sunny coast of Africa. From our first meeting, you have ever been in my thoughts. The photograph I took of you reposes next to my heart, and I cover the bit of paper with ardent kisses."

I listened to this outpouring of his pent-up passion, and in a helpless manner followed the figures of the gay dancers with colored paper caps on their nodding heads, whirling and

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swaying to the music on the veranda. Life seemed to whisper, "Forget." Wishing for a moment to collect my thoughts, I made a movement to join the merry company.

Gently drawing me back, Mr. Hargard implored "Give me an answer to-night. You are far from the scenes of your past sorrows. If you will only listen to my pleading, you will quickly forget all these fancies that trouble you now in the happiness of our life together." I asked, "Give me more time to consider." Our conversation was interrupted by a rocket which shot up into the purple sky, splitting into a shower of iridescent points. The voices of approaching guests exclaiming over the fireworks came nearer. Mr. Hargard, with sudden energy, seized my arm and through set teeth whispered, "This is enough to set one's heart on fire." I could feel his trembling, and I was tempted to say "Yes" and make it my wedding day after all. It stirred me to witness the emotion of this strong, earnest man, so deeply moved by love.

The stillness of the night was again disturbed by voices. "Come, let us join the party," said I.

The illuminations died away, the garlands faded and the last guests departed. In the se-

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clusion of my own room I thought of the absent one, and memory recalled Edward's image, his imposing, well knit figure and graceful carriage; his noble brow, and those piercing eyes of blue that darkened with tender emotion; but, greater than all of these, the comradeship, the hours spent in congenial interchange of thought. The picture was glowing in my imagination, when the memory of the events of the evening returned, mocking my longings.

I could still feel the touch of the strong hand of Mr. Hargard, tanned and roughened by the work of farming. No, I could not yield. I did not love him, and here in the long communion of my soul, I realized that Edward had aroused in my heart that flame which could only be extinguished by death.

My sister urged me to accept Mr. Hargard, when I told her of his proposal, and set forth convincing arguments favoring his suit. "I should be equally unhappy," I answered to all her pleadings.

The rainy season set in. Every day and every night the rain poured as though it sprang from a giant faucet, and swept away sun, moon and stars. It continued to pour incessantly and finally came through the roofs. People

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slept under their raincoats and umbrellas. A business friend of my brother-in-law came to us with his family and begged shelter for the night. After remaining several days they returned to their home, but the floods had carried their house away.

Many houses were completely demolished and the Boers told us that for twenty years there had not been a rainy season to equal this. As soon as the rain ceased my sister commenced preparations for a visit to Denmark. Instead of going to London, as I expected, I accompanied her. This time we traveled from Johannesburg to Cape Town which is less interesting than Durban, but the route was shorter.

The train stopped ten minutes at the station near Mr. Hargard's farm. As it slowed up, I leaned from the car window and gazed in the direction of his farmlands. The remembrance of my visit with its exciting adventures and stirring experiences, came up before my mental vision, in fact, it helped to lessen my unhappiness for a time. I could have thrown kisses to it and thanked it for what it had done for me, but, instead, I kept repeating to myself, "I will come back,—I *may* come back. There, joy and happiness beckon to

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me." All that I could possess lay still and lifeless before me, and like a driven creature I fled from it.

The train stopped. With my eyes still fixed on the farm I saw a man on horseback galloping toward the station—I recognized Mr. Hargard. Hastily throwing the bridle over the horse's neck, he sprang to the platform and came toward me. "At last! Those beastly Kaffirs made trouble and delayed me and I nearly missed saying good-by to you," he said, apologizing for his mud bespattered clothes. "Well, you surprised me," he continued, "by leaving Africa so soon. But you will return? Yes, you will, I am quite sure you will learn to care for me." "I will try, you know," I barely murmured. "I build on that," was his reply. Two big tears gathered on my cheeks. I felt helpless to respond to his love and I couldn't say whether I wished to come back, or never to see him again. I was in an agony of uncertainty.

The painful interview was terminated by the starting of the train. I felt that fate was the arbiter of my destiny. I turned my face away from him toward the restive horse, which, at the sound of the whistle sprang away without its rider and galloped away through the fields.

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I feared to speak and as the train began to move, Mr. Hargard reluctantly withdrew his hand. His face was a wordless question. Quite awkwardly I murmured, "Your horse is running away." "I don't care if I never see that horse again," he said, passing his fingers through his hair. "But tell me——" the rest I did not hear. The train gained in speed. Two pleading eyes followed me.

We boarded the steamer at Cape Town. A telegram from Mr. Hargard was handed me, containing his farewell message and begging me not to forget him. A large crowd collected on the pier and long before the ship sailed the band was playing lively airs.

I witnessed no sorrowful leave takings, as I had seen at Southampton. Everybody was joyous. My attention was drawn to a negro, who, judging by his appearance, must have been nearly a hundred years old. He danced gleefully to the tune of the big brass band, and his motions were so quick and graceful that I flung coins to him. In appreciation, he became still more agile, and the attention of all the passengers was attracted toward him. They, too, rewarded him with small coin. Finally the band played a war dance, and the old man and the other negroes who were loiter-

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ing on the pier, danced it with vivacity and abandon.

Amidst wild cheers, the liner left the harbor of Cape Town, and we were steaming for the North.

XXIV

BACK TO COPENHAGEN

MY sister took an active part in the games aboard ship. I spent the time reading and thinking of my future. I could not decide upon what course to pursue. It seemed to me it would be a dreadful mistake if I returned to Africa to marry a man whom I did not love, while my innermost thoughts belonged to another. Gradually it became clear that I must live an entirely new life, but where and how, were questions as yet unanswered. I had traveled in many lands, seen much, appreciated beauty wherever I had found it, and had sounded the depth of human love—but my existence was still void. The future was veiled. In these hours of despair no new life was to be found—at least—not on earth.

Often when sitting in my steamer chair I was so overcome by this train of thought that to gain relief I paced the deck for hours alone. The monotonous sound of the waves filled my

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heart with indescribable melancholy. At times I felt like leaping into the sea and in the waves end suspense beneath their crests of white foam. I pictured the future without love. There was no future. I consoled my poor, tired heart with the hope that somewhere, out yonder, there might be happiness. It was useless. I was fast reaching a decision to make the fatal plunge, when glimpses of the Island of Madeira appeared on the horizon. Slowly we steamed along the coast. Grayish, purple volcanic rocks rose boldly from the sea, and the terraced mountains, covered with richest vegetation in colors of vivid hue opened more and more to the view, as we approached the island.

This exquisite scenery filled my senses with joy. The love of nature was still mine. We anchored. We joined a party going ashore. At the edge of the water, oxcarts met the tourists to convey them up the mountain. Four passengers could ride in each cart. The view grew more beautiful as we followed the narrow path. On either side were rocky walls covered with vegetation, shaded by pine woods. In the small villages, peasants were sitting outside their cottages weaving chairs, baskets and fancy articles, of willow twigs. Oranges, apricots, figs, lemons and bananas ripened in abun-

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dance. In the gardens and parks flowered purple passion flowers, mimosas, pink and white camellias, giant heliotrope and magnolias, and great palms bordered the roads. The sound of waterfalls and the low jingling bells on the oxen, completed the idyl.

Native boys bombarded us with clusters of flowers, and we, in return, threw coins to them. The shower of blossoms overflowed the sleigh, literally burying us beneath them, and many falling to the ground were crushed under the runners, exhaling most delicate odors. The summit reached, we rested for luncheon and enjoyed the view of the entire island and the sea beyond. However, for the present, the call to luncheon proved the most attractive. The Madeira wine sharpened our healthy appetites. The company ate greedily the fresh vegetables and the big pink strawberries with drops of dew still clinging to their leaves.

Our trip down the mountain was made in a conveyance shaped like a basket. It carried two passengers and was attended by a couple of men lashed to it, to guide and hold it back. We sped down at a tremendous rate over the slippery cobbles that shone like ice. The men handled it with great adroitness, steering from the back in a skillful manner around the zig-

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zag corners. It seemed as if we would certainly upset, but we reached the bottom in safety. In a short time, sunny, picturesque Maderia was but a memory.

Without much warning there sprang up a violent gale as we steamed northward. The ship tossed from side to side, the waves rose higher and higher, dashing in briny spray over the deck. Heavy clouds gathered. Sailors hurried back and forth, giving no thought to which way the ship balanced. The passengers fled precipitately below, while stewards folded steamer chairs, hugging them tightly and falling with their load at every few steps. I kept on deck gazing with wonder upon the sea as the storm increased, and thought how easily the waves could swallow me up. Yet I had no courage to jump overboard. Instead my thoughts returned to beautiful Madeira and to Edward. I seemed to rise above everything to an atmosphere not contaminated by false pride and jealousy. As I watched a solitary seagull dipping and circling, my heart whispered, "Come, Edward, let us fly to the land where the sun always shines!"

Such were my reflections, when the solemn voice of a sailor said: "Well, Miss, I think you had better go to your cabin," and I fol-

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lowed his advice immediately, as I could no longer depend upon my "sea legs." I said farewell to the little birdie that balanced and swayed in the ship's ropes, and with difficulty descended, catching at everything as I went. All below was a pandemonium of moans and groans. Cries of agony—"God help me, I am dying!" "Stewardess, come quick!" came from all directions. The last that I saw was an old gentleman thrusting both hands into his pockets, searching for the key of his cabin door. I heard him relate to somebody, "When I was young, I once acted in a chorus, making rolling waves in a play." If the rolling waves were in a play or real, they ceased to roll, for suddenly I lost consciousness. When I came back to life, I found myself in my berth. How I got there I do not know. I only know that the bright sun shone again in a clear sky, and fresh air blew through the open porthole. I left my narrow prison and sought the deck, where the convalescent passengers were basking in the sun. "Rolling waves," with a face still pale as sour buttermilk, and an expression of "thank God, it is all over," held his own in silence.

Soon after we landed.

XXV

THE STRESS OF VALOR

I WAS always sincerely content to return to my own country. Home was so peaceful. Mother prepared my favorite dishes but this time it was in vain. She felt, as only a mother could, that behind all this gloom and depression, was a great sorrow, but when she inquired the cause, I only said, "Dearest mother, it is nothing."

For half a year I remained at home, making no plans for the future. Mr. Hargard continued to write, assuring me of his deep love, and expressing the ardent hope that I would soon return and become his wife. What was my answer to be, or what was I to do? I questioned. Perhaps it was better to return. I endeavored to believe that a home provided for me was all important; on the other hand it was so difficult to forget the past.

I knew whose love filled my heart. Yet, I realized that Edward was married and that all was ended between us. I knew that I could

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never love Mr. Hargard, but simply cling to him for benefits and comfort. The idea was revolting. Why had I not explained at the beginning of our acquaintance? I felt a hypocrite, but reasoned that others would have acted in the same way. My promise was torturing me, and love would not come. I wished to be honorable. Yes or no? Yes or no? "How am I to know what is right? How am I to act?" No reply.

I destroyed one letter because it said "No" and tore up another because it said "Yes." The third, which I mailed, expressed a weary conscience, I could not do him the great wrong of becoming his wife without love.

Salvation lay in work: I must do something; I could not live at home without adding my share to the family income. My young sisters and brothers were dependent upon my parents, and father was still paying off his debts, the consequence of the catastrophe some years earlier.

The time for my sister's return to Africa drew near, and she urged me repeatedly to return with her, admonishing me to be sensible and consider my future.

She departed without me.

No light had yet been shed upon my way for

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the future. Somber thoughts of again beginning life devoid of happiness in love, filled my consciousness like drifting clouds. To work in Copenhagen, to return to my home each evening only to meditate upon the past, was more than I could endure.

I must seek another country, where new experiences might banish the dismal thoughts that now attended me day and night. It must be a country in which I could earn much money. I longed to be rich. Nothing could be changed, so let me work. Since we must carry out this life in hope of a better, let me fill the present with activity. Occupation had ever been a faithful and encouraging friend. I could not entertain the thought of being supported by one toward whom my heart remained indifferent.

In the twilight of the summer evening I walked along the coast. Reaching the mole I continued beyond the pier. The water was calm; there was no wind. The sail boats lay like white blurs on the sea. I leaned over the railing, gazing far down into the clear, green depths. I was looking for something—for another world. As I lifted my head, a great American steamer in the distance sent the waves toward me. Their surge broke the si-



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AS I lifted my head, a great American steamer in the distance sent the waves toward me.

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lence of the sea, stilling the storm in my heart, and answering my question. I framed a resolution. "The country beyond the Atlantic! The country with the magic name—America—was to give me that forgetfulness for which I yearned!"

I walked home as elated as if I had discovered the continent itself.

My parents were filled with anguish when I revealed my plans. They considered it unnecessary for me to travel abroad again, and advanced every argument to persuade me to abandon the journey. But their pleading was futile. I listened sympathetically to their protests, but nothing could alter my decision. My father's only remark was: "God bless and keep my child!" while my mother wept in silence.

XXVI

THE VANTAGE GROUND OF AMERICA

OUR hearts were overwhelmed with grief as I embarked for the United States.

Buoyed up by the spirit of victory, I was confident that I would find in America the conditions that would completely satisfy me. The future held glorious prospects. Hope beckoned. A new era was beyond.

More swiftly the ship moved. I cast aside the unbearable garment of bitterness and donned a fresh one, woven in all the merriment of the ship's company, and yet! and yet! the future life was a series of confused conjectures. One passenger attracted my attention, because he reminded me of Edward as he looked when I knew him first. His spirit lived again, he seemed to speak when the young man conversed with me. For that reason, perhaps, I could not resist asking him to call on me, when he said that he intended to remain in New York. In my bewildered brain ran the ques-

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tion again. Will the new world cause me to forget Edward?

We entered New York harbor. The city lay almost concealed under a thick mist of heat with countless towers and houses looking as if they were elevated into the sky. The Statue of Liberty rising out of the ocean so free and majestic, thrilled me! An entrance never to be forgotten!

One passenger ("Mephistopheles" I had named him, because his figure, expression and beard resembled pictures of that gentleman), wrapped in his scarlet steamer rug, paced up and down the deck in the evenings speaking to no one. Now he stood beside me wringing his hands, exclaiming "Famous! Famous!" and his face brightened with hope as he gazed toward the statue. The inspiring figure was full of promise. Even for one who brought a wounded heart from the Old World, there were possibilities in this land of freedom. I did not fail to snapshot the big woman and her torch, as an important picture for my collection.

Immediately after landing, I visited some old friends of my parents, an elderly couple who received me most cordially. While talking, Mr. Nielsen suddenly raised his finger at

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me. "By the by," he said, "running away from home?" Then he referred to an incident when as a little child I had run away, and was later found alone on the street by a patrol who carried me to the police station. I had forgotten the occurrence, but was not surprised at the tale. I have run away on so many adventures since.

It was agreed that I should make my home with them. To find an unexpected home the moment I landed, emboldened me. Thanking them, I added that this had been my mother's wish. While Mrs. Nielsen arranged my room, her husband attended to my luggage. I was sincerely affected. Such prompt hospitality was so easy and natural that I wondered if it were the "American way."

XXVII

MODEL HATS

DURING the days that followed I tried to familiarize myself with the city. Almost overpowered by its magnificence, I walked up Fifth Avenue, and feasted my eyes on its display of riches and prosperity. Here were gold and luxury, and just now I desired wealth above everything. I smiled; the seeming endlessness of the streets, the crowds, the splendor of its fashionable sections, made me realize my own insignificance.

Sometimes I felt discouraged, for what was I—a stranger—to do in this city, where no one was interested in me and my plans? On the other hand, I had two hands which, though empty, were willing, and the will which directed me to “ride on over all obstacles and win the race.” I scanned the “want advertisements” in the daily papers. To obtain a position was not so easy as I had imagined. My experience in foreign countries, and even my letters of recommendation from well known

fashionable establishments, did not help me in the least.

The shops preferred a milliner familiar with New York trade, and one who had worked in the city. Wherever I applied, this information was given, so that I became tired and lost courage. And yet these words "Go ahead" spurred me on. I heard them everywhere. Sometimes they came from a driver; sometimes from an elevator boy, and sometimes from a child. I was told it was slang, but the sentence clung to my memory as words that an American would repeat if he wished to reach his goal; and so they urged me, no matter how weary, to go ahead, making another and another attempt—but with the same result—until at last I entered a store where I asked for an opportunity to show my skill. I said I was willing to work for a small salary. Perhaps pity had something to do with the result, for my proposition was accepted. My face wore rather a dejected look, but, at all events, I was given a chance and directed to work one week "on trial."

The next morning I entered the shop with a heavy heart, for I felt that with six dollars a week, the prospect of becoming wealthy was far off indeed. I determined to do my best,

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even though the salary was the lowest that had ever been offered me.

The woman in charge was pleased with my efforts, and after the trial week my salary was raised to nine dollars. I soon realized that my work was very satisfactory and worth more than I received. I summoned all my pluck and demanded twenty dollars per week. At first the manager refused. Angry and surprised, she told me in plain words that my demand was so unreasonable that she could not for a moment think of granting it. But, as I happened to know that all the hats I trimmed were "good sellers," I insisted on the twenty dollars, and declared that unless I received it, I would seek a position elsewhere. When she realized that I was in earnest, she granted my demand, and I was proud of my victory.

Two months elapsed. From morning until night I sat in a dirty workroom, lighted by gas, filled with dusty, ragged boxes, frames and customers' discarded hats. Any moment one might expect a box with its contents to drop on one's head from a nearby shelf. No space to move about in. Seated as close together as possible at the work table, with nine common girls, I was forced to listen to never ending empty talk, and to remarks about my per-

Model Hats

sistent silence. One day a girl remarked in vulgar tone to her friend across the table, "Sadie, listen! What do you say to our taking her out some night for a good time and waking her up?" But I kept to myself, did my work, and led a secretly unhappy life; spending the evening in solitude, thinking over my misery, and from time to time comparing the big, sunny African farm to the narrow and poorly gas-lit workroom.

I attended evening school. Here I realized the extent of New York's generosity to the immigrants, who, unfamiliar with the language, were taught without expense. I was astonished to find that the city maintained not only the schools and granted free instruction, but also supplied students with necessary books and material; that the immigrant may not only learn English, but he may even take up various trades. No questions asked about his family or circumstances, as in the Old Country. The schools furnish free education to all who desire to learn. I enlarged my vocabulary of the English language and studied United States history. At the end of the term, I was awarded a prize, a copy of Longfellow's *Evangeline*, for regular attendance—not for cleverness!

XXVIII

LIFE FROM ANOTHER ANGLE

THE night school closed, and my evenings were empty again. I accepted the invitation of Mr. Drake—my steamer acquaintance—to see the life of the great city. We visited splendid restaurants and palace-like hotels, filled with fashionable crowds and with women wearing gems fit for royalty. It was a mystery to me how Americans could make the money to purchase all these luxuries.

I became obsessed with a desire for wealth. I determined, if possible, to see at close range how these people lived and how they made their money. But how to gain access was the difficulty.

After considering the matter, I came to the conclusion that I would seek employment as a domestic in one of the homes of wealth. I knew nothing of cooking, but I was sure I could be an efficient maid. Mr. Drake laughed at my intention. He treated it as a joke.

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Nevertheless, I left my position and applied at an agency for work. The obstacles were just as great as when I sought a milliner's position on my arrival in the city. I was handicapped by ignorance of New York conditions as well as by the lack of a maid's qualifications. The woman in charge directed me to sit with the other applicants, and to accept whatever might come. She would try to find a place for me.

When patrons called to employ maids, I was frequently interviewed, but when they looked at me and made inquiries they saw that I did not appear to be a servant, and doubted if I could perform the duties. An entire day was spent in the office in this tiresome manner, but when I returned home I decided to make a different attempt.

The following morning my appearance was radically changed—my hair drawn tightly in a knot; my hat stripped of trimming, save a small, stiff, homely bow in front. My dress was plain. I took my seat among the other girls, awaiting my turn, and felt more in harmony with their style than I had the day before. Again several ladies interviewed me, but the difficulty was always the same—I had had no experience as a house worker. Some one

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telephoned the office for a girl, and the manager told me to go and "try my luck."

The house was located in one of the finest residential sections of New York, and the interior was exceedingly attractive. The lady's daughter received me. I said that I was the maid for whom her mother had telephoned. The mistress of the house was very busy, and her daughter made the necessary arrangements with me. They kept a cook and a laundress. The work to which I was assigned looked simple enough; I answered that I was not afraid to try. The young lady seemed to like me, and promised that she would help me if the work proved too hard. I returned to the office and announced that I had been employed and paid my fee. I was to begin my new work on the following day.

Returning home I packed my trunk, but Mrs. Nielsen smiled and advised me to take only a few necessary things as I could call for other articles from time to time, as I needed them. I purchased a morning dress and a black one for afternoon wear. My new employer provided her maids with caps and aprons. The next morning I left, carrying my small valise. The old couple—whose kindness had been such a solace to me—pressed me

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to come and see them often. They were sorry to have me leave them as they had grown very fond of me.

Arriving at the house where a new future was to open, I was again received by the daughter, who showed me to my room where I immediately changed to working dress. With dubious feelings I descended the stairs and was introduced to the mother. She was a tall, stout, dark woman, with sharp, large eyes. She measured me with a stern look and told her daughter to give me all necessary instructions. There seemed an endless number of rooms, and, really, they were too large to be called rooms, they were rather halls, stately and beautiful. They showed no signs of being occupied. The library especially gave me that impression. The billiard room was deserted, and dust had been allowed to gather there for months. In the basement was a large swimming pool, but I was quite certain there had not been any water in it for a long time. Besides the large apartments there was a small living room, which the family used and where dinner also was served.

Summing up my impressions, I concluded that the house had once been owned by a millionaire who understood and appreciated

Life from Another Angle

beauty and art, and who, probably, had gone abroad, selling his palatial residence to this Jewish family.

I was bewildered, as my thoughts had been entirely occupied with the impression of the art and wealth the house contained, and I had not heard many of the instructions. First I was to set in order the sleeping apartments. When finished the daughter inspected my work, but was not entirely satisfied. I was unable to arrange the bolsters and pillows on the beds after the American fashion. I pulled and stretched them in vain and finally gave it up. When the mistress saw them, she said the pillows looked as if they were drunk. The first days were not very pleasant, because I was unaccustomed to the work. The cook told me that the owner of the house and his wife were very wealthy and stingy Jews, and that she intended to leave at the end of the week.

One evening the table was set in the magnificent dining hall for a large dinner party. When clearing the table, I threw all the chicken bones into the garbage and thought nothing more of the matter. The following morning, after the cook's departure, the mistress asked me if I could cook, and when I truthfully answered that I could not, she

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snapped out that every young girl ought to be able to cook. Then, she herself, began preparations for dinner and inquired what had become of the bones left from the dinner of the day before. I told her that I had thrown them away. At this she became hysterically angry and said that she had planned to use those bones for to-day's soup. I answered that all the bones thrown away had been taken from the guests' plates, and she replied with a sarcastic allusion to the soup that was served in restaurants—and besides, she added "the guests were all relatives so the bones could not possibly have become infected."

Well, something had to be done, for the dinner hour was approaching. Mrs. Goldstein put some fat into a frying pan. I was told to stir it while she went upstairs. I stirred the fat until it burned, and a thick smoke arose from the stove. My mistress hurried from the third floor, and without taking breath scolded me severely. I heard the angry voice through the dense smoke but did not see her until she was right upon me, asking if I did not know that the smoke had filled the house. Of course, the fat was literally "in the fire." My thoughts were so intent upon the incident of the chicken

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bones, that I forgot it was fat that I was stirring.

The laundress failed to come on her regular day and I was expected to perform her duties. The daughter was visiting friends, and although Mrs. Goldstein had important business matters to attend to, she remained at home to help me at the ironing board. When she thought me too slow she told me to iron three handkerchiefs at one time, in order to get through more quickly. I did not think seriously of my duties but wished to study the home life of these rich people. It was the lady here and the lady there—she took care of everything, and no detail was too small for her attention. Her husband said little.

One Sunday morning a conference was held in the library. Papers and drawings were scattered about the table, my mistress directing things, offering suggestions and giving orders to the architect who was present. When I entered the living room Mr. Goldstein was sewing buttons on a shirt. I proffered my services, but he thought that I had "other things to attend to" informing me that "it is not the first time I have plied the needle," at which I ran into the adjoining room to laugh outright. Some days later the mother completed

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a business transaction involving thousands of dollars, and the daughter's fiancé was to be elected a director of the new enterprise. A fine dinner was given to celebrate the successful deal and a toast drunk to the future of the business. I was given a small quantity of wine to pour into five glasses. The toast was honored by the diners merely touching the glasses with their lips. After dinner a few drops were still left in each wine glass, which the master of the house poured into a water glass, then asked for the bottle—this was to be uncorked the next time a thousand dollar enterprise was celebrated. I shook my head and thought that if this were necessary in order to be a millionaire—I would never become one.

The heavy work tired me so I went back to Mr. and Mrs. Nielsen who were not surprised to see me. They hoped this experience had been sufficient, but I said perhaps life in this particular house was an exception, and that domestic service might be more interesting in other families.

I again applied at the employment office for a position that did not require hard work. This time it was easier as I could now claim, at least, some experience. I was engaged by an American family whose home indicated

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great wealth. It was necessary to purchase another morning dress. While waiting for my change I saw an old acquaintance standing beside me at the counter. I spoke first for she did not recognize me; my hair was still drawn back tightly, and my hat without decoration save the homely bow. She regarded me in amazement, and when I told her about my new work, she sadly shook her head, and said: "No, this does not look like you." When we parted, she looked as though she pitied me, saying simply, "How you have changed!"

When I left for my new place Mr. and Mrs. Nielsen smiled at each other, wondering how long this experiment would last.

The house was in pleasing contrast to that of the last position. Everything was clean and orderly. The lady was elegant and aristocratic, and was known by her neighbors as "The Queen." I liked my new mistress and my duties were light. Affairs were carried on systematically, and the only complaint made was due to my disarranging certain pieces of bric-a-brac when I dusted; but when I explained that I thought they looked better where I had placed them, she agreed and they were left as I had arranged them.

The other servants continually complained

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about the food. They said they did not get a sufficient quantity. I did not understand it, for there was plenty to eat, as far as I knew. Of course, we did not get the same food as that which was served to the family, but then eating was not my sole object in life.

One morning, to my dismay, my brother called, having just arrived from Copenhagen, on his way to California. Finding me in this position of service, and seeing my cap and apron, he asked: "What kind of a masquerade costume is it you have on?" I treated it as a joke, asking him not to write about it to our parents. He said he would not if I would give it up.

During the afternoon, I sewed in the apartments used solely by my mistress. She was very kind to me, though proud and haughty. I compared my present position in life to hers. I, too, might have been the wife of a man holding an honored place in society. One day these thoughts overpowered me. Only evil gossip had prevented my marriage. I became nearly insane at the thought while sitting there. I suddenly burst into convulsive sobbing. My mistress tried to quiet me; gave me some medicine and offered to telephone for her physician, but I assured her that no doctor in the world

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would be able to help me. She forced me to lie down, and left some medicine in the event I might need it in the night. I recovered, but realized that my present mode of life would never lead to anything. My mistress regretted that I thought it necessary to leave, as I was a "quiet girl," faithfully performing my duties.

Tired and exhausted, not from work, but from sheer despair, I walked through the streets with my little satchel, considering new means whereby I might hope to forget. A blinding snow storm made walking difficult, but I could not ride in a street car with wet eyelashes. I tried to plan, but ideas whirled around in my head, like the snow flakes. When I arrived at the Nielsen home I had no idea how long I had been walking, for I had been partly unconscious and numb with cold. "My little mother," as I called her, received me in her kindly way and said, jokingly, that she and her husband had expected me long ago. When she looked into my face and realized that I suffered, she piled pillows and blankets on a lounge, wrapped me up as though I had been a baby, and told me to rest while she set the table for luncheon. "A good cup of coffee will do you good," she added. Her little

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luncheons were always inviting, enlivened by sensible conversation and motherly advice.

The meal finished I sat absorbed in meditation. It was evident I could not reach wealth or happiness by the way I had chosen, and my longing for Edward was so great that I was incapable of performing any work. There arose such a storm within that I wished to quiet it by putting a bullet through my heart. Then came the memory of those words I had read: "Life is not a transient thing." I reasoned that this period of misery must lead me to something. Life is the opportunity to express ourselves. Then I thought of what Maeterlinck said: "Life has been given us—for a reason we know not—but not for us to enfeeble it, or carelessly fling it away."

I searched my heart, finding nothing to make life even tolerable, but still, underneath it all, ran a strong undercurrent of hope; a power I did not understand, reminding me that I must live; that it would be unpardonable to deviate from the path in which I was to walk farther ahead—but I had lost my road.

I recalled a letter written to Edward's wife, asking her to do everything possible to make him as happy as I still felt he deserved—and her answer. She said my letter was proof of

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the nobility of my character, and that a woman whose heart was strong and kind would never remain unhappy. She begged me to control my feelings and to remember that happiness was attained by making other people happy. I did not know how to secure happiness, until it suddenly occurred to me that I might find it if I became a nurse.

Between my plans and their execution the time was never long, and I went for the third time to the employment office, seeking a position as nurse. A lady suffering from paralysis had instructed the office to engage the services of a companion for her, and hoping that I might find consolation in just such duties, I accepted the position.

This lady was critically ill and unable to move. I assisted her as well as I could. I realized the horror of being so absolutely and hopelessly helpless, and became absorbed in caring for her; but at the same time her plight made me more depressed than ever. Even home letters failed to arouse any interest. My friends tried to persuade me to abandon my invalid, and to use my talent for designing; money would be forthcoming and my desire of being rich realized. They argued that I was only wasting time in grieving. I admitted

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that this was true, but the dream of victory had been dispelled. The old energy and enthusiasm were gone. I longed only for death.

Meantime my patient was removed to a hospital—I was compelled to make a change. After living with this helpless woman I appreciated more than ever that I could move my arms and legs, and I should, at least, be grateful for that. I resolved to return to my own line of work, and to secure a position far from New York.

XXIX

COTTON THREADS OF ALABAMA

AT a wholesale house I presented my letters of recommendation, which had additional value now that I had worked in New York. Customers were interviewed and my city experience seemed to help, but my dress provoked doubt. I lacked style, or probably my troubled face did not appeal to them.

An Alabama merchant engaged me. The agreement stipulated for my immediate departure for the usual exhibition prepared for the spring opening. My employer remained another week in New York.

The prospect of a high salary and more travel enlivened my spirits. Two days later I heard the familiar words, "All aboard!" I kissed Mrs. Neilsen good-by, and joked about her not minding my running away. Soon after I was speeding toward the South in a Pullman sleeping car. To my foreign eyes it seemed peculiar, with no separate car for

Cotton Threads of Alabama

ladies. I waited in suspense to see what would happen.

A black porter pulled two seats together, opening parts of the roof, as if it were automatic, drawing from it mattresses, pillows and curtains, the roof part made another bed. Like a boy with building blocks he constructed long rows of bedrooms. Mine was as comfortable as my own room. I had heard of an American who built a house and furnished it completely, twenty-four hours before his wedding day, as a surprise to his bride! After watching the clever method of transforming a railroad car into a hotel in a few moments, I understood that it could be possible.

While the train sped through the rainy night, I felt very easy in my berth, though I lay awake puzzling over the problem of resuming my clothes. Early next morning I unbuttoned the curtain, and peeped out to see how other passengers managed. A lady was walking calmly down the aisle to the dressing room, with her arms full of clothes, puffs and curls of false hair. How shocking if she should meet a man passenger! I felt sorely embarrassed, as I hastened with my traveling bag in her wake, looking back and feeling elated that nobody observed me. The train gave a vio-

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lent jerk, and my bag was flung from my hand, spilling its contents. I quickly picked up the articles, threw them into the bag, and vanished into the dressing room, this time without curiosity to see if anybody had noticed me.

Returning to the berth to collect the rest of my baggage, I moved the ladder standing in the aisle, just as a passenger was about to use it. I was not aware of his intention until I heard an angry voice beyond the curtain two berths below, say: "What does this mean! Who took the ladder away?" Looking over my shoulder I saw, to my amazement, two short legs dangling, and several heads peeking from behind the curtains of the other berths. I went to the poor fellow's rescue, placed the ladder under his feet, and excused myself. Without a word, the little stout man descended and disappeared into the dressing room. When the odd bedroom was changed into a railroad compartment, the passengers lounged in their seats again. It was an amusing experience. I wondered what would be the easiest and most dignified way to climb from those upper heights without a ladder, if sleep had held me captive, and the train were due.

I reached my destination; the sister of my new employer was at the station to receive me.

Cotton Threads of Alabama

I was to live with his family until I found a comfortable boarding house. His home was a short distance from the city.

I stayed a week with them. When I came home in the evenings, the family gathered in the parlor, and I was always asked to tell of my travels. When I moved into the city I promised to spend my Sundays with them.

Interest in work returned. In this general store, negroes as well as white people traded. Occasionally I asked permission to serve the negroes; they amused me as they tried on the hats in every conceivable way and looked so funny, each desiring the hat most becoming to her color. One tried on a mourning hat—she expected her husband to die very soon. A few weeks later she appeared at the store. Now that her husband was dead she was ready to buy the hat that she had asked me to lay aside for her.

Elaborate preparations were made for the "spring opening." The hat department was decorated with flowers. An orchestra was engaged. Conspicuous advertisements appeared in the local papers, featuring me as the artist who was personally and thoroughly acquainted with the most fastidious and exclusive trade

Cotton Threads of Alabama

of Paris and Berlin, as well as that of New York.

At my employer's request I wore the best dress in the store. He also suggested, with a bashful smile, that my hair would look particularly attractive if I added artificial waves and curls.

On opening day I hardly recognized myself, dressed like a French doll, exhibiting the hats to the many ladies, who came to see the latest styles from the great fashion centers of the world. While the orchestra played the customers regarded me closely, for, according to the advertisements, I must be a wonder. Especially the negroes were fascinated by the sight of this milliner from distant lands, and they stared at me with unconcealed curiosity. The exhibition continued three days, and afforded me much pleasure by giving me an opportunity to observe the different phases of life in a southern city.

I spent much of my leisure in exploring the city. The habit of gathering curios had become second nature and it was kept alive despite my discontent. From Birmingham's industries I added to my collection pieces of steel, slag from the iron in the making, which turned to a mass of stony dust. I went into

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the cotton fields and picked the South's greatest product in all of its stages of growth. How beautiful were the bursting cotton-pods! Touched by the wind they looked like a flock of sheep moving in the distance. When I reviewed all the processes through which the cotton must pass, I felt sorry for it. In its greatest beauty the machinery tears and tortures it until it is ready to go out into the world and be transformed into the many articles through which its duty is done.

With the terrible heat of summer, the Black Death fell on the city, and numbers of people were attacked by this terrible disease. All that medical science could do to alleviate the distress and to prevent the further progress of the plague was done. Everybody had to be vaccinated, and notices were published in the daily papers that failure to submit to vaccination would result in prosecution and punishment.

The disease was most fatal in the negro section, and when the poor blacks entered the store nobody wanted to serve them. "There comes the Black Death," the saleswomen would exclaim and then disappear. I was the only one who ran the risk. I was not afraid to face death, I rather courted it. I asked: "Why is



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THE South's greatest product.

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it so dark in my soul?" I sought understanding; sought the truth and salvation from the lies that cling to life. I sought to know the right, but found only the wrong. If Death had bespoken my doom, I was ready.

The pestilence hung like a pall over the city. It was dreaded and discussed by everybody. No one could predict when the Black Death would claim an additional victim. Few people were seen on the streets and many negroes were arrested because they refused to be vaccinated. A bottle of whiskey was often found in their possession when arrested, and this served only to make the punishment severer; Birmingham was a prohibition city. The plague lasted more than two months, but was finally stamped out and the city quickly resumed its usual busy appearance.

My engagement ended, and I refused to sign a contract for the next season, as I was unable to make definite plans for the future. I could not be depended upon. My old gloomy mood overtook and governed me at times. Mr. Allinson sympathized with me, and thought that my work was of a high order. He said that it was really too bad that I had allowed my feelings to overcome me to

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such an extent. Eventually my health and all my prospects would be ruined.

He advised me to read a book that had brought happiness into many lives, and he explained wherein its strength and inspiration lay; he was convinced that it would prove of great and enduring benefit to me.

He purchased the book and gave it to me. It was *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. I returned the volume, telling him that he had gone to useless expense, as religion did not interest me. He wished me, however, to keep the book as time might teach me that real and spiritual benefit was to be derived from a study of this work. I placed it in the bottom of my trunk without reading a line.

Mr. Allinson once more requested me to sign a contract for the next season. He was certain that everything would come out right if I would forget the past, and think of the bright and joyous future. Although I again refused I promised that I would discuss the matter with him when he came to New York.

I left Birmingham via Savannah. One experience on that voyage impressed itself upon my mind. It was the receipt of a wireless message announcing the result of the Johnson-

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Jeffries prize fight in Reno, Nevada. The message was long and all the passengers were summoned to the saloon where it was read aloud. I followed the crowd and never have I seen an audience more attentive. Great excitement prevailed; every time the message said that Jeffries had been bruised or thrown, I could hear deep sighs and groans from the passengers. I was glad when the reading was finished. I did not understand how people could be interested in such brutality.

XXX

HARD KNOTS

UPON my return to New York I again lived with the dear old couple. The sojourn in the southern city had aroused new courage, and sensibly increased my bank account. I accepted invitations from friends who desired to divert my thoughts, among them an artist who conducted a school of painting. Her studio was filled with curious and interesting things; I availed myself of the privilege of visiting her and derived much comfort from her companionship.

The autumn season was approaching. Mr. Allinson was already in the city buying his fall stock. He asked me if I were as much of a pessimist as ever, and to this question I answered that I was. I refused his proposal to return to the South and accepted an offer from a Western firm which paid a higher salary. Mr. Allinson again pressed me to read *Science and Health*. He was afraid I would continue in utter despair and dejection, but I assured

him I needed no religion—it could not make me happy and that I had not yet glanced at the book.

When we separated he wished me happiness and prosperity and once more repeated his request. If not now, then some day, when thinking that everything and everybody in the world had deserted me. The book had been of the greatest help to thousands and would surely prove beneficial to me.

I went to the West with the expectation of seeing many wild Indians.

Upon my arrival I found that my employer had rented a room for me which was gloomy, cold and uncomfortable, in a dingy lodging house. However, I was cheered by the crude pictures of Indians that decorated the dirty walls. My imagination leaped to the possibility of meeting live savages in the streets. Surely this could be, for was not the state itself called Indiana? Even the bed blankets were of Indian make. In my dreams that night, the pictured Indians left the walls, and became very much alive indeed.

Later experiences proved that my ignorance of America was the only justification for believing stories of Indians taking part in the social life. To compensate for my disappoint-

Hard Knots

ment I frequented the picture shows, often remaining for the repetition of the reel depicting the red men in their wild life. I bought copies of the weird Indian music that accompanied the pictures, and treasured them among my collections.

On a Sunday excursion I saw a squaw bathing her children in the river. I could not resist taking a snapshot, and gave the squaw twenty-five cents for the privilege. She evidently thought this was "easy money," for she said, in broken English, "Me take off clothes."

Toward the end of my third week I was summoned to the manager's office. I obeyed with an undefined apprehension that the interview meant a serious issue. As I entered the room the manager greeted me with a curt good morning—then began without preface, "We find that your model hats are below the standard required by our trade." As I had trimmed some sixty-five models this bald statement rather startled me. Continuing, he said, "Since this is the case we hesitate about dismissing you, but if you will consent to work for ten dollars less per week than our first agreement, you may remain till the end of the season." "But surely," I began, "you cannot break your contract?" "You will remember," he replied in

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cutting tones, "we have made no written contract." Too true! I had only his word that such an arrangement had been entered into. I was in a strange city. I reflected that it was useless to argue the question, and answered quietly that I must have time to consider his proposition before I decided to return to New York. The season was too advanced to secure a desirable engagement, and the lawyer whom I consulted said I had no legal redress unless a written contract could be placed in evidence.

Pushed to the wall by my misfortune, I grimly accepted the inevitable—and remained. But hot anger burned in me when I found that after I had agreed to the decrease the despised models had already been sold and were to be copied before they were sent out.

A successful season sufficiently refuted the charge of unsatisfactory work. But the accusation rankled. Was this wounded vanity? I think not. No, it was the cruel injustice that made the offense unforgivable. Probably I exaggerated its importance. Youth is prone to have but one viewpoint—its own. I refused to return the following season, though most satisfactory terms were offered.

Soon after my difficulty the store was

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robbed and the millinery stock wantonly ruined by the thieves. Shall I admit that I cherished a secret gratification that the managers had been punished for the wrong they had done me?

Working for a firm whom I believed had taken advantage of me, I settled down with bitter thoughts and felt antagonistic to all that touched me in my intercourse with those outside the store. The silly gossip of the boarders, who spent so much time in rocking chairs making stupid jokes, bored me. By this time I had changed my boarding house, and, after a tedious search for a clean, quiet room, was settled with an old lady, who promised fresh eggs and milk direct from the farm.

I quickly forgot those indignant landladies of dirty, ill-kept houses, who, with unconcealed scorn, closed the door after the insolent remark, "We don't rent to ladies," with emphasis on the word ladies. I tried to think that the farcical sentence would have been uttered more kindly in the old country.

Life with no prospect of happiness was more than I could face. Discouragement had eaten too deeply into my soul. My thoughts traveled back and forth like a shuttle in the hand of a weaver, and the warp of the cloth

Hard Knots

was uneven and knotted so that it seemed it could never be utilized. The problem was always, always with an IF. The girls in the Berlin store had inflicted sore punishment. If—I had only been their comrade. If—I had only kept to the truth. If—I had understood in time the meaning of the detective's letter. I drifted, ever, in a sea of helpless despair. I worked and worried. I tried to conceal my feelings. The nervous strain was unbearable. Life narrowed down to the long, trying day of work; and the gloomy hours of night, spent in my bedroom, brought no relief. Memory of the fate of that forlorn creature "Mam'sel Thidsfordrive," whom I had watched in my childhood, became so real that I feared I might become like her. What a price to pay for a silly falsehood! In the fever of my thoughts her figure was before me. Lying awake, wide-eyed, I could see all her movements. Although I had lost my faith, I implored God to take her away. Mechanically I repeated the prayer over and over, until I closed my eyes and she vanished.

XXXI

ENDEAVOR PIERCES THE FILM OF DISASTER

UPON my arrival in New York I found my old friends' daughter and her family living with them, and I had to find a boarding place elsewhere. Work failed to interest me. The ordeal of a new business venture almost paralyzed my ambition. Mechanically I went from place to place, inquiring for a position. That any one could make use of my services was more than I could credit. My energy had burned itself out. I now abandoned my hope of riches.

My artist friend spoke encouragingly and begged me to be sensible. She persuaded me to participate in little festivities. I accompanied her and her fiancé and his father on a yachting cruise around Long Island Sound. In spite of the luxury and beauty of the yacht I was tortured when I observed the happiness of my friend and her fiancé in each other's society—old wounds bled again, old memo-

The Film of Disaster

ries repeated their sad, melancholy dirge of the happiness that was never to become mine.

"There is no greater sorrow
Than to be mindful of the happy time
In misery."

My thoughts were ever of Edward. He had been the light of my soul and that light had gone out. An inner voice reminded me that somewhere there must be a higher power that would wipe out the torment of hatred I felt toward those who had ruined my life and destroyed my happiness.

On a cold September day I sat solitary in my room. The fire burned slowly in the grate. As I watched, it seemed to flash one picture after another before me, like a film, and sputtered and popped as if to attract my attention. The sun had been hidden for days; the clouds hung low and gray; the wind moaned a melancholy farewell to summer. I sat motionless, glancing first at the fire pictures and then surveying with sad introspection the gloom beyond the windows. My mind wandered over the experiences of the past. I opened my trunk, took out all the curios gathered during my travels, and arranged them in groups according to the countries to which they belonged.

The Film of Disaster

Each group had its own story to tell, but they looked so cold—just like those inanimate objects in the museum. These I had collected myself, but now they no longer inspired me with joy. No, I did not care for them, and I wondered if anything in the whole wide world could reawaken my interest in them. With my lap full of these treasures I was tempted to cast them into the flames. I handled them mechanically, clasp ing the Kaffir's bracelets on my wrists and ankles, strings of beads and ornaments around my throat and in my hair, and draped myself toga fashion in a mantle from India; then, turning the leaves of my diary, I read the parts that described incidents connected with these souvenirs. "This beautiful belt, beaded with many bright-colored beads, exchanged for a noisy rattle which a Kaffir woman fastened to her husband's belt. I explained and showed her how her child should play with it; but no, Husband was delighted and danced wild steps to hear it rattle. Yes, how precious then, but now they are as worthless as I myself, and we can "all go to the devil!" With these remarks I pitched my diary into the fire and watched it crumble into blackness. As the last written words burned to ashes I heard a knock. I looked up, star-

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tled. Could it be a warning not to destroy my treasures? I listened. The knock was repeated. When I opened the door there stood my landlady. "I was afraid you were asleep," she said. "I knocked several times."

She was frightened when she saw the Kaffir's knife in my hand. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed, "what are you doing?—and how you look!" "Only playing I am a savage African," I answered. She looked at me for a moment, her lips moving without a sound. My coolness and composure reassured her. She tried to speak, mumbling words about risking her life. I inquired if she had brought me a message. "Oh yes, I quite forgot. A gentleman has called to see you. He is in the parlor." "Tell him I will be down in a few minutes," I said, and began removing my barbaric costume. Before closing the door behind her, she looked back as if she doubted my sanity.

Entering the parlor I was surprised to see Mr. Allinson. He was distressed over my appearance and asked if I were ill. "No, I am not," I answered abruptly. "Then why do you look so haggard?" "Oh," I said, "this life is not worth living." "Little friend," he said in a changed tone, and began to speak of religion. I answered rudely, "I do not wish to hear any-

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thing about God. I hate Him because He has only let me suffer." But Mr. Allinson was not impatient. "If you knew the right way to look upon Him," he said, "your life would be worth living." I only sighed and murmured: "No one has yet shown me the right way." He answered in a businesslike tone, "I called to ask you to sign a contract for next season, but first of all I shall take you to a lady in New York who is the daughter of an old friend. She is one of those practitioners whose influence for good is so wonderful that I feel that she will be able to help you." I realized that I indeed must look as though possessed of all the ills of the world, for he spoke very earnestly. I carelessly said, "Take me to this wonderful lady." "We can go now," he answered. "Get your hat and coat." When we reached the house of his friend she was not at home. Mr. Allinson gave me his card and I promised that I would call the next day and present it that she might know he had sent me.

When I returned to my room it was cold; the fire had burned out. The remains of my beloved diary lay in a heap of ashes on the hearth. Scattered about the room were my treasures, and the brightly ornamented garments shone ghostly in the light from the street

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lamp. I sat for a while and toyed with these mute friends of my solitude. They were all my own, but I stopped at the thought of what had led me to visit the strange lands, in which I had accumulated all these quaint objects. I thought of Mr. Allinson's God, so merciful and strong. Was it He who had given me that which I from childhood had desired and dreamed of? I had never given Him credit for anything. Gathering my treasures carefully together I said to myself, "Yes, I'll go tomorrow and seek this wonderful lady and ask her to tell me about her God."

XXXII

THE AWAKENING

ON the way to her house my mood was as gloomy as if I were going to my own funeral. The shadow of despair enveloped me. I was in no mood to go, but I had given my promise to the kind friend who was interested in my welfare. Slowly I walked the streets, not caring what happened to me; now reading a billboard with idle interest, or stopping before a stationer's window, scanning verses on birthday cards with no consciousness of their meaning. The moments dragged. I lingered as I had done in school days when lessons were unlearned, and I shunned the school; so was it with the coming interview, but it seemed as if an unseen power pushed me forward till I reached the house and presented my friend's card to the practitioner, who received me most lovingly. She took my hand and asked me what was troubling me, but I merely shook my head and wept. I was so

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very unhappy. She said something about God and His love for me.

When I looked into her eyes of luminous brown, all her tender words about God, His love, and my right to happiness became strangely alive to me. I was so deeply stirred by this teaching that I felt stronger when I left her than I had for many a day. I had gained strength to face the future anew.

I walked home through Central Park. It was Sunday afternoon. The park presented a gay appearance. The sinking sun touched the autumn leaves. Carriages, automobiles, horse-back riders sped by, and the promenaders looked gay in their new fall garments. Mingling in the Sunday crowd I felt conscious of my somber dress, in harmony with the dead leaves on the trees. Like the trees, I, too, wished to shake them off and live again in fresh garments.

When I reached home I brought up from the bottom of my trunk *Science and Health, with Key to the Scriptures*, and turned its leaves for the first time. I read on page 492, "God is Mind, and God is infinite; hence all is Mind." The serious reading lessened that awful disgust for life. Instead of wishing for death I found joy in living, and my father's

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last words, "God bless and keep my child," returned with a new and impressive meaning.

I continued my visits to this dear lady until faith in divine Love cleared away the clouds of grief. She urged me to come whenever I needed help, and asked if I were connected with any church. Shamefacedly I confessed that I had not attended church very often since the day of confirmation, whereupon she invited me to visit her church.

On the following Sunday I attended a Christian Science service. It surprised me that so many people believed that God does heal the sick and broken-hearted. One of Mrs. Eddy's hymns expressed my mood, and I kept repeating the lines:

Love wipes your tears all away,
And will lift the shade of gloom,
And for you make radiant room.

It inspired hope. I thought, if there be any truth in it I can be helped, if not, I shall turn a deaf ear to its teachings. Faith in my own strength and will power was great. I had relied upon them more than upon God, but the result had led me to commit many acts of folly. Now I found the God I had been looking for all my life—the divine Mind.

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I had been idle for some time. I resumed my daily task with joy in my heart and a smile upon my lips. It seemed as if everybody smiled, too, and that all the world had been transformed. It was only *I* who had been changed. I awakened as from a long sleep. I had lived in ignorance of the truth and had expected to find salvation only in the grave.

Once while visiting my new friend I spoke with unusual animation of my experiences and she exclaimed, "You should write a book!" She suggested that I show her some of the photographs which I cherished as souvenirs of my travels. Her enthusiasm gave me courage. The true kindness, the spirit of friendship so generously manifested, her comments on my tales of travel and experiences, were so stimulating that when I now went over my narrative with her, point by point, I deemed it all rather romantic. Had I really lived and taken part in these happenings that now spread like a romance before my vision?

With lightened heart I returned to my gloomy boarding house. My room had never been fully furnished and in my old somber moods the lack had irritated me. My landlady greeted me with her usual apology, and the promise that these appointments would be

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provided. I smilingly told her that she need not bother about them. "I am not missing them." She stared doubtfully and asked, "What has happened; you seem so cheerful? Are you going to be married?" "No," I replied, "it is something higher," and closed the door.

I wrote to Mr. Allinson, expressing all the gratitude that filled my heart, for introducing me to the woman whose inspiring influence had opened for me a new view of life, and for Mrs. Eddy's book, which had proved to be a priceless gift.

Accepting my artist friend's invitation to a large reception, I, for the first time after all this struggle, dressed carefully with taste. I had dreaded to look in a mirror, but standing before it in a blue gown veiled in chiffon, I appeared transformed. The narrow mirror reflected not only the new dress, but a new expression in my eyes, a beauty which I had never possessed—the beauty of happiness.

I called again on my dear friend, the Scientist, taking the promised pictures. She selected two of them and wrote an article describing some of my experiences. It was accepted and published as an article of education by a leading millinery magazine in New York.

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It attracted notice and the newspapers demanded more details of my travels. I had learned to do better things than to sit and nurse sorrow and disappointments.

Now I enjoyed my little museum, which was added to when I spent a vacation at the home of the mayor of Port Jervis. He showed me all the Indian objects he had presented to the town, and said, "In my cellar you will find more, which I am going to give to you." When we returned to his house we went directly to the cellar. These real Indian belongings, thickly covered with dust, aroused intense delight. It meant more than if I had been in the Klondike, digging gold. The buffalo horns were the most valuable, as the buffalo is nearly extinct. I carried these treasures into the yard and carefully washed them, preparatory to placing them in my *museum*, as I presumptuously called my modest collection.

I saw a band of real Indians, not where I expected to see them, but in New York City. They appeared in a performance of *Hiawatha* on the river bank. This play of striking beauty recalled those times when I was a child, longing for these same adventures. The reality was before my eyes. After the performance I walked among the Indians and peeped

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into their wigwams. In one were three couches covered with blankets and skins of wild animals. Parts of costumes, arrows, fish, scalps, hatchets and weapons used by the performers lay scattered or in heaps. At the entrance an old man and woman sat gazing like statues into space. I patted the woman's shoulder, touched her stiff, fringed hair falling over her forehead, fondled her beads and confidentially told her that I had come a long way to see her. She blinked stupidly but made no response to my polite phrases. In their kitchens the fire was built on the ground and the cooking done in a kettle suspended from three sticks. I climbed the hill where Minnehaha's body had been placed in the trees, according to the funeral custom of the Indians. My curiosity gratified, I tried to engage in talk with the young Indian warriors, but their moans and grunts were answer to my questions. When I left I contrived to shake hands with one of this savage but picturesque race. It was interesting to come so near to the people who once possessed all this continent, which is now the home of one of the greatest nations of the earth.

XXXIII

IN THE LAND OF POSSIBILITIES

IN America my happiness was recovered. In New York I found a home and the opportunity to make friends and regain a social life. The loneliness of those hours, when hands and brain fatigued call out for the human side of life, play havoc with a business woman's success—and doubly so in my case—a stranger in a strange land.

Overlooking the tidal current of the East River stands a modern hotel for business women. Under its roof are homes for the several hundred women who have sought its shelter. And here, too, I found my way.

It was the beginning of night when I arrived. I was puzzled, fearing it might be an "institution." I hoped my age would be within the limit. It can readily be understood that one might be tempted to misrepresent such facts, if the limit barred her from enjoying the privileges of this ideal hotel. Once before I had been rejected at "a home" because I was two

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months too old. However, I entered. The brilliantly lighted vestibule gave a cheerful welcome, with its many electric lamps glowing in the ceiling. Approaching the desk I was prepared to answer searching questions regarding age, religion, birthplace and salary. Nothing of the kind. I was requested to register as in any other hotel. The elevator boy preceded me to the fourth floor, directing me to room 402. It faced the river. The view from the window held me as I stood in the darkness watching the traffic on the water. This animated scene made me almost forget the hour. In former boarding houses the outlook had usually been a dark court.

Suddenly the thought came, perhaps the lights are shut off at ten o'clock, and I am not yet familiar with my new room. The moonlight showed the electric button, in the same second there was light. It was after ten. I opened my door, inquiring from a friendly girl who was passing how long we were allowed to use the light. "As long as you wish," she answered, so I had plenty of time to explore my new quarters. How clean and cozy! Tinted walls, artistic furniture, a rug, bureau and table covers that matched the bed comforter, and sheer curtains shading the windows imparted a

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sense of home. Reposing in the white bed I feasted my eyes upon these comforts so long desired, which cost no more than I had paid in miserable, gloomy boarding houses, where literally I had gasped for air, light and space. Before falling asleep I was sure I would never ask for anything better.

I was curious to see the guests. In the dining-room, grouped about attractive tables, seating four, were women of every age and nationality. They were better dressed than the ordinary working class. I heard later they were teachers, librarians, nurses and business women. There was not much conversation at breakfast, as every one was eager to get off to business. But at dinner the hum of voices was lively indeed. At my table sat an American, an English woman and a German woman—I thought they must be suffragists. At least the American and the English women were, but the German spinster disapproved of the absorbing topic, and tried in vain with sneering remarks to change the subject.

After dinner the social life was at its best in the music hall, in the book-filled library, or in the small reception rooms, called, in the parlance of the house, "beau parlors."

On the roof garden flowers blossomed and

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green vines clung to trellises etching their silhouettes on the brown tiles. The moon found a rival in the clusters of electric lamps, fitted to posts and rafters, overlooking the river.

Visitors were welcome till 10:30 when chairs and tête-a-tête benches must be abandoned to the shadows of night. "Parting is such sweet sorrow," but the insistent whistle of broad-shouldered James reminded all laggards that business girls must sleep. To soften the cruel edict he made a sign by turning the switch twice. If any loiterers were obdurate he called out in his Irish brogue, "Time is up." That phrase capped the climax.

Occasionally lectures, dances and musical entertainments are given in the music hall, and guests have the privilege of entertaining their friends there. They may play the Victrola or attach the teleelectric to the grand piano when in the mood for dancing. An atmosphere of freedom pervades the hotel, for no law orders guests home at a stated hour. When I lived under other rules I was tempted to remain out later, but now that I am free I have no desire to abuse the privilege. Flagrant disregard of the liberty is dealt with by the management's quiet request that the guest surrender her room key.



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*THE inspiring figure was sponsor
for the Promises of the free land.*

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The women of the Junior League, who built this home of independence, have taken the initiative which is more than appreciated by the self-supporting members of our sex. It would be a great help to business women if similar hotels were established in other cities of the world. There are "homes" for girls, but they resemble institutions with their irritating restrictions. The lonely woman of unmentionable age is condemned to live in a dreary boarding or rooming house, as desolate as if living in a desert.

Many of my leisure hours in my new home are spent out of doors, in the roof garden, or on one of the six wide verandas, where there are hammocks, rockers and comfortable chairs to lounge in after the day's work. The hotel is so near the water that it makes me feel as if I lived on board a large steamer and the ever-changing view so enchanting that I almost imagine the river to be the Grand Canal. At night, along the shores, from the houses, bridges and towers, thousands of lights sparkle and are mirrored in luminous lines on the water, only to be broken into glowing points by the swift foaming swell from the passing boats. On holidays my greatest pleasure is to lie in my steamer chair watching the moving river

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craft. The sight carries me back to other scenes and memory awakens. I rewrite my beloved diary—how I began life, how my dreamship brought me across the sea to foreign shores, how I ran aground in a mist of unhappiness and that the lifted veil revealed the new life for which I had longed on my way from Africa. I have heard the voice of Truth. If I search for higher things, seek God first then life can prove no failure.

America is my adopted country. Here I found happiness. Here my ambition for higher intellectual attainments is being realized.

Once more I recall the fateful day on which I entered New York harbor. The sight of the Statue of Liberty thrilled me, the inspiring figure was sponsor for the promises of the free land of possibilities. I am living in the fulfillment of its prophecies!

I have told my story: what I wanted; what I thought; and what I found.

THE END

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